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Venerable M. Backus—

Isaac Backus

CHURCH HISTORY

OF

NEW ENGLAND,

FROM

1620 TO 1804;

BY ISAAC BACKUS, A.M.

WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.

BAPTIST BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

1839.

CHURCH HISTORY

OF

NEW ENGLAND,

FROM

1620 TO 1804.

CONTAINING

A VIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE, DECLENSIONS AND REVIVALS, OPPRESSION AND LIBERTY OF THE CHURCHES, AND A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

BY ISAAC BACKUS, A. M.

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA:

BAPTIST TRACT DEPOSITORY, 21 SOUTH FOURTH STREET.

STEREOTYPED BY L. JOHNSON.

1839.

THE annexed Memoir has been carefully compiled for this volume, from the American Baptist Magazine—the second volume of Benedict's History—the writings of Backus, and such verbal recollections of him, as the writer has been able to secure. It is hoped that it may give increased interest to the perusal of his history; while it will by no means supersede the necessity and the desire for a more complete and elaborate "Life of Backus," which one of his distinguished friends, who can have ready access to his extensive diary, and the scenes of his protracted labours, has promised to prepare, for our "Biographical Series."

King and Baird, Printers,
No. 9, George street,
Philadelphia.

RPJCB

MEMOIR.

Isaac Backus was born in Norwich, Connecticut, January 9th, 1724. His parents were pious and respectable members of the Pedobaptist church in that town. His father was a descendant of one of the first families in the settlement of Norwich; and his mother's pedigree is traced back to the family of Winslows, who came to Plymouth with the first European emigrants to this country, in 1620. At the time when the celebrated Whitefield preached with such signal success in that vicinity, some of Mr. Backus's connexions united with the *Separates*,—a name given to several independent churches formed about this period, of a more zealous and spiritual character than the Associate Pedobaptist churches, which then and long after claimed to be the *standing order*, or churches established by law. For uniting with these, they were harrassed and persecuted by the ruling party. The mother of young Backus, when a widow, with some other of his relations were cast into prison, by these persecuting zealots, solely for exercising their conscientious convictions, in uniting with those churches which were not established by law. It was in the midst of this excitement, that the subject of this memoir was brought to the knowledge of the truth, in the 18th year of his age. He furnishes the following simple and striking account of his conversion.

"My being born of religious parents, and having a religious (though not what is called a liberal) education, I have ever esteemed an unspeakable favour. Yet I neglected the great salvation for more than seventeen years, because of the secret imagination that it would abridge my present liberty and comfort; and also, that when I should in good earnest set about the work, God would be moved to help, pardon, and save me. But in

May, 1741, my eyes were opened to see that time was not at my command, and that eternity was directly before me, into which I might justly be called the next moment. Then I knew what it was to work for my life for three months: until on August 24, as I was alone in the field, it was demonstrated to my mind and conscience, that I had done my utmost to make myself better, without obtaining any such thing; and that I was a guilty sinner in the hands of a holy God, who had a right to do with me as seemed good in his sight; which I then yielded to, and all my objections were silenced. And soon upon this, a way of relief was opened to my soul, which I had never any true idea of before, wherein truth and justice shine with lustre in the bestowment of free mercy and salvation upon objects who have nothing in themselves but badness. And while this divine glory engaged all my attention, my burden of guilt, and evil dispositions was gone, and such ideas and inclinations were implanted in my heart, as were never there before, but which have never been rooted out since, though often overclouded."

Soon after this change, he united with the Pedobaptist church in his native town, where he had been accustomed to attend worship; but after about two years, some troubles in that church led to his withdrawal from it. It was not until September, 1746, that he entered upon the duties of the Christian ministry; and the principles which governed him in this important step are described in his discourse, published eight years after, entitled "*The Nature and Necessity of an Internal Call to preach the Gospel.*"

Near the close of the following year, he was guided by the disposal of Providence, to a parish or precinct called Titicut, upon the river between Bridgwater and Middleborough, in the county of Plymouth, Massachusetts, where a Pedobaptist church, of the Separate order, was formed in February following, to which he ministered with evident success. In August, 1746, disputes about baptism were first brought into this church; and while the pastor, Mr. Backus, was prayerfully considering the subject, ten persons were baptized by Elder Moulton. The descrip-

tion of his subsequent exercises, and the result to which he was brought, is thus given in his own words.

"About three months after, when the heat of controversy was abated, the question was put to my conscience in my retired hours, Where is it, and in what relation to the church, do those stand, who are baptized, but not converted? I could see that all the circumcised were obliged to keep the passover; and I had seen that there was no halfway in the Christian church, nor any warrant to admit any to communion therein, without a credible profession of saving faith. No tongue can tell the distress I now felt. Could I have discovered any foundation in Scripture for my former practice, I should most certainly have continued therein: But all my efforts failing, I was at last brought to the old standard, so as to leave good men and bad men out of the question, and simply inquire, *What saith the Scripture?*" By this means his mind was at length settled, in the full conviction of the baptism of believers only, and he submitted himself to this ordinance, August 22, 1751.

For more than four years afterwards, he continued ministering to the same church, on the principles of open communion; many of its members being decided Baptists, and others still cleaving to the principles and practice of Pedobaptism. This difference created no little embarrassment, and furnished frequent occasions of disquietude to both parties, which led to a fresh search into the cause of these difficulties. The following account of the result, is from the pen of Mr. Backus.

"The arguments of the beloved Bunyan for a free communion with all saints, had before appeared conclusive to me and to others; but a review of them discovered his mistake. One argument is, that plain laws of old, were sometimes dispensed with; as circumcision was omitted in the wilderness; David ate of the shew-bread that was not lawful for him: and the people in Hezekiah's time ate of the passover, otherwise than it was written. But it was found upon search, that each of these were extraordinary cases, which were not repeated; and therefore could afford no plea for dispensing with

rule, at ordinary times. And as to Bunyan's capital argument, which is, *God hath received them*, therefore we ought to; it was observed that his example is often inimitable by us, but as far as it is imitable, it is always *in the truth*. Hence truth is never to be violated for any one, no, not to save natural life, which all lawful means should be used to preserve. And truth so clearly requires baptism before the supper, that Pedobaptists do never come to the table with any but such as are baptized in their esteem. Neither could we understandingly act in being buried in baptism, until we were convinced that what was done to us in infancy was not gospel baptism; therefore to commune at the Lord's table with any who were only sprinkled in infancy, is parting with truth, by practically saying they are baptized, when we do not believe they are. I since find that the learned and pious Dr. Watts in his 'Rational foundation of the Christian church,' allows this argument to be just, though many still wrangle against it."

Upon this conviction, that truth limits church communion to believers baptized upon a profession of their own faith, and that into the Christian church neither natural birth, nor the doings of others, can rightly bring any one soul, without their own consent; a church was constituted at Titicut, (known as the first Baptist church in Middleborough,) January 26, 1756, and by assistance from Boston and Rehoboth, the subject of this memoir was publicly recognised as their pastor in July following. This was the first Baptist church constituted in Plymouth county, and at the time was the only one in an extent of country above a hundred miles long, from Bellingham to Cape Cod, and near fifty miles wide, from Boston to Rehoboth.

In this place, and as the faithful and endeared pastor of this flock, Mr. Backus spent sixty years of his useful life. In 1749 he was married to Susanna Mason of Rehoboth, with whom he lived in the greatest harmony more than half a century. According to his own words, "She was the greatest earthly blessing which God ever gave him." They reared up a somewhat numerous family of

children, of high respectability: and though never very amply supported by the people to whom he ministered, they were enabled, by the blessing of Providence, and their own industry and frugality, to accumulate an estate of considerable value.

The church over which he was the spiritual watchman was small for many years. But they had some additions from time to time, until the blessed revival which begun in 1779, and increased their number in three years from fifty-nine members to one hundred and thirty-eight. This church was also the germ of several other Baptist churches, and the nursing mother of several distinguished ministers of the gospel. In little more than a quarter of a century after its constitution, there were seventeen churches within the wide limits above described.

Besides the labours of Mr. Backus as a Christian pastor, he was eminently distinguished as the noble defender of religious liberty and the rights of conscience, and as an ecclesiastical historian. The part which he took, and the service he performed, in both these spheres, for the general welfare of the Baptist churches, furnish a number of incidents which ought to be perpetuated, and also serve to illustrate the excellences of his character. He early imbibed a settled aversion to civil coercion in religious concerns. He was taught its iniquity both by experience and observation, having been himself taxed and seized as a prisoner to coerce payment, to support a minister on whom he never attended, and indeed at a time when he was pastor, and regularly officiated to another church. His members, too, were sometimes imprisoned for similar causes; nor would he be likely to forget the horror early produced in his mind by the imprisonment of his widowed mother. Few men have exerted themselves more than he did in the support of the equal rights of Christians, to worship God unmolested. In 1772 he was chosen an agent for the Baptist churches in Massachusetts, in the room of Mr. Davis, formerly pastor of the second church in Boston, then lately deceased. The duties of this agency, which was merely of a civil character, were executed by him with fidelity, intrepidity,

and some degree of success. Members of Baptist and other non-conforming churches and congregations in that state, were then so continually harrassed for the support of the established clergy, that they found it necessary to have some one thoroughly acquainted with the laws and usages, to advise on sudden emergencies, and to afford assistance to those who were in trouble. Their great object was to obtain the establishment of equal religious liberty in the land, which the dominant party were determined to prevent.

When the disputes came on, which terminated in the revolutionary war and the independence of the United States, the Baptists vigorously united with their fellow-citizens in resisting the arbitrary claims of Great Britain; but it seemed to them unreasonable that they should be called upon to contend for civil liberty, if, after it was gained, they should still be exposed to oppression in religious concerns. When, therefore, the first Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, the Warren Association, viewing *it* as the highest civil resort, agreed to send Mr. Backus as their agent to that convention, "there to follow the best advice he could obtain, to procure some influence from thence in their favour." When he arrived in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Baptist Association appointed a large committee, of whom Dr. Samuel Jones was one, to assist their New England brethren. "But our endeavours," says Dr. Jones, "availed us nothing. One of them told us, that if we meant to effect a change in their measures respecting religion, we might as well attempt to change the course of the sun in the heavens."

Mr. Backus failing of success at Philadelphia, on his return met the Baptist committee at Boston, by whose advice a memorial of their grievances was drawn up, and laid before the next Congress at Cambridge, near Boston, to which the following answer was returned:—

"*In Provincial Congress, Cambridge, Dec.* 9, 1774.

"On reading the memorial of the Rev. Isaac Backus, agent to the Baptist churches in this government:—

"*Resolved*, That the establishment of civil and reli-

gious liberty, to each denomination in the province, is the sincere wish of this Congress; but being by no means vested with powers of civil government, whereby they can redress the grievances of any person whatever; they therefore recommend to the Baptist churches, that when a General Assembly shall be convened in this colony, they lay the real grievances of said churches before the same, when and where their petition will most certainly meet with all that attention due to the memorial of a denomination of Christians, so well disposed to the public weal of their country.

"*By order of the Congress,*
"JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*

"*A true extract from the Minutes,*
"JOHN LINCOLN, *Secretary.*"

Such an Assembly as is here mentioned, convened at Watertown, July, 1775, to which our brethren presented another memorial, in which they said, "Our real grievances are, that we, as well as our fathers, have from time to time been taxed on religious accounts where we were not represented; and when we have sued for our rights, our causes have been tried by interested judges. That the representatives in former Assemblies, as well as the present, were elected by virtue only of civil and worldly qualifications, is a truth so evident, that we presume it need not be proved to this Assembly; and for a civil legislature to impose religious taxes, is, we conceive, a power which their constituents never had to give, and is, therefore, going entirely out of their jurisdiction. Under the legal dispensation, where God himself prescribed the exact proportion of what the people were to give, yet none but persons of the worst characters ever attempted to *take it by force.* How daring then must it be for any to do it for Christ's ministers, who says, *My kingdom is not of this world!* We beseech this honourable Assembly to take these matters into their wise and serious consideration before Him, who has said, *With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.* Is not

all America now appealing to Heaven, against the injustice of being taxed where we are not represented, and against being judged by men, who are interested in getting away our money? And will Heaven approve of your *doing the same thing* to your fellow-servants! No, surely. We have no desire of representing this government as the worst of any who have imposed religious taxes; we fully believe the contrary. Yet, as we are persuaded that an entire freedom from being taxed by civil rulers to religious worship, is not a mere favour, from any man or men in the world, but a right and property granted us by God, who commands us to *stand fast in it*, we have not only the same reason to refuse an acknowledgment of such a taxing power here, as America has the abovesaid power, but also, according to our present light, we should wrong our consciences in allowing that power to men, which we believe belongs only to God."

This memorial was read in the Assembly, and after lying a week on the table, was read again, debated upon, and referred to a committee, who reported favourably. A bill was finally brought in, in favour of the petitioners, read once, and a time set for its second reading; but other business crowded in, and nothing more was done about it. In this manner have the Baptists frequently been shuffled out of their rights. After this, they made a number of attempts to get some security for their freedom from religious oppression, but none was formally given them. They had many fair promises, which were never fulfilled; and when the State Constitution was formed, the Bill of Rights was made to look one way, but priests and constables have gone another. The first article of the Bill of Rights declares "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights," &c. The second declares, "No subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his *person*, *liberty* or *estate*, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience," &c.

But notwithstanding all these declarations, many have

been molested and restrained in their *persons*, *liberties*, and *estates*, on religious accounts.*

These things we have thought proper to insert in Mr. Backus's biography. He was undoubtedly the draughtsman of some of the memorials of his brethren, and he was certainly the able and undaunted expositor of them all. His whole soul was engaged in the prosecution of his agency; insomuch that he became the champion of non-conformity in New England, and was, on that account, much vilified and abused by the established party.

When he waited on the Congress at Philadelphia, he was accused of going there on purpose to attempt to break the union of the colonies. The newspapers abounded with pieces against him, some of which he answered, and others he treated as beneath his notice. In one, he was threatened with a halter and the gallows; but he had been too long inured to the war, to be terrified by such impotent threats.

Bad as were the laws of Massachusetts at this period, their interpretation and execution by bigoted and interested courts was frequently much more exceptionable. Against all such perversions Mr. Backus failed not to lift up the voice of solemn remonstrance. The undaunted intrepidity with which he withstood corrupt or party-blinded judges, even to the face, is still remembered by some of that waning remnant who were contemporaneous with his later years.

The other sphere of service in which the subject of this memoir acted so distinguished and useful a part, was entered in obedience to the pressing and reiterated solicitations of his brethren. With characteristic humility he thus adverts, in the preface to vol. i. of his history, to his feelings and circumstances when first solicited, about the year 1771, to write a history of the churches of New England. "When I was requested by several gentlemen of note and others, to undertake this work, two great objections presented themselves to my mind; namely, my great unfit-

* This remained true till within a few years since, when the constitution of Massachusetts was finally purified of this obnoxious feature, and all sects were placed on equality.

ness for it, and the difficulty of obtaining the necessary materials. But their importunity prevailed against the first, and Divine providence has removed the other, by conveying into my hands a variety of authentic materials, much beyond what I conceived could have now been obtained in the world." In the same preface he thus indicates the necessity of re-writing the early history of the Puritan churches and governments.

"It may well be supposed, that men who are striving for more power over others than belongs to them, will not set their own or their opponent's disposition and character in a just light. And if it should be found, that near all the histories of this country which are much known, have been written by persons who thought themselves invested with power to act as lawgivers and judges for their neighbours, under the name either of orthodoxy, or of immediate power from heaven, the inference will be strong, that our affairs have never been set in so clear a light as they ought to be; and if this is not indeed the case, I am greatly mistaken."

Under these circumstances, Mr. Backus set himself to the diligent search of all the original records within his reach, and in 1777, in the midst of the confusion and suffering occasioned by the war of the Revolution, he published his first volume, a large 8vo., and brought down the history of the colonies, and particularly of their ecclesiastical affairs to 1690. A single sheet was added as an "Appendix, containing a brief summary of the Ecclesiastical Affairs of this country down to the present time."

This volume is now very scarce, and though containing ample and valuable materials for the historian, they will scarcely require to be republished in their present shape.

His second volume contained the Church History of New England, from 1690 to 1784. It included "A concise view of the American War, and of the conduct of the Baptists therein, with the present state of their churches." In 1796 a third volume appeared, gleaning up a portion of materials which had been omitted in the others, and continuing the history down to that time. He says, "Through the whole, I have compared actions and events

with the word of God, according to the best light I could gain from every quarter."

The first and third of the above volumes were printed in Boston, the second in Providence. They contain in the aggregate more than 1300 pages octavo; and though from the circumstances in which they were successively produced, it could not be expected that they would be free from repetitions, and some transposition of the order of events, yet the student of our early ecclesiastical history will in vain look elsewhere for much of the interesting and important matter here contained. The style is uniformly lucid and nervous, without any attempt at polish or ornament. The sentiments and reflections freely interspersed, are such as arise naturally from the events narrated, and are fully imbued with the desire of civil and religious liberty. A delightful spirit of candour is evinced, in giving just commendation to whatever was truly excellent in the character and deportment of the Puritans; and if their now indefensible intolerance and bigotry receive a somewhat severer denunciation than we have been accustomed to hear awarded to them, let us remember the exasperating circumstances under which the author wrote. Let it also be borne in mind that he clearly discriminates between the early principles of the Puritans, and some subsequent inconsistencies of their practice.

His last historical work was the volume herewith published. It consists of a condensation of the most important things embraced in his former publications, into one smaller volume, with a concise view of the southern states; the whole being continued to the time of its publication in 1804. This is by far the most useful of his historical labours, for common readers; and will by this cheap republication, be made widely accessible.

Besides these literary enterprises, and the ordinary discharge of his pastoral duties, he travelled and preached very extensively in New England, and on one occasion, in 1789, in consequence of a request from the southern brethren for some one of the ministers of the Warren Association to come and assist them in the great field of

labour which was then opened before them, he spent six months chiefly in Virginia and North Carolina, in which tour he travelled over three thousand miles, and preached one hundred and twenty-six sermons. His pen was rarely idle for any considerable length of time, and besides the list of about forty publications which he sent to the press, within the last half century of his useful life, he wrote a number of circular letters, and other communications for various periodicals. His newspaper articles were not on the ordinary political topics, but were designed to expose ecclesiastical oppression, and to defend the noble principles of religious freedom.*

This distinguished man finished his earthly course with great composure, November 20, 1806, in the 83d year of his age, and the 60th of his ministry. For a few months

* The following is a complete list of the books and pamphlets which he published, in regular order. A Discourse on the Internal Call to preach the Gospel, 1754. A Sermon on Gal. iv. 31., 1756. A Sermon on Acts xiii. 27, 1763. A Letter to Mr. Lord, 1764. A Sermon on Prayer, 1766. A Discourse on Faith, 1767. An Answer to Mr. Fish, 1768. A Sermon on his Mother's Death, 1769. A Second Edition of his Sermon on Gal. iv. 31., with an Answer to Mr. Frothingham, 1770. A Plea for Liberty of Conscience, 1770. Sovereign Grace vindicated, 1771. A Letter concerning Taxes to support Religious Worship, 1771. A Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. Hunt, 1772. A reply to Mr. Holly, 1772. A Reply to Mr. Fish, 1773. An Appeal to the Public in Defence of Religious Liberty, 1773. A Letter on the Decrees, 1773. A History of the Baptists, vol. i. 1777. Government and Liberty described, 1778. A Piece upon Baptism, 1779. True Policy requires Equal Religious Liberty, 1779. An Appeal to the People of Massachusetts against Arbitrary Power, 1780. Truth is Great and will Prevail, 1781. The Doctrine of Universal Salvation examined and refuted, 1782. A Door opened for Christian Liberty, 1783. A History of the Baptists, vol. ii., 1784. Godliness excludes Slavery, in Answer to John Cleaveland, 1785. The Testimony of the Two Witnesses, 1786. An Address to New England, 1787. An Answer to Remmele on the Atonement, 1787. A Piece on Discipline, 1787. An Answer to Wesley on Election and Perseverance, 1789. On the Support of Gospel Ministers, 1790. An Essay on the Kingdom of God, 1792. A History of the Baptists, vol. iii., 1796. A second edition of his Sermon on the death of his Mother; to which was added a Short Account of his Wife, who died in 1800. Published 1803. An Abridgment of the Church History of New England, 1804. A Great Faith described, 1805.

previous to his death he had been laid by from his public labours by a paralysis, which deprived him of the power of speech and the use of his limbs. But his reason continued unclouded to the last, and in his expiring moments, he manifested entire resignation to the will of Heaven.

Few of his favoured brethren of this generation, are adequately impressed with a sense of their indebtedness to the labours of this departed champion of their cause. He was unquestionably one of the most useful ministers that has ever appeared among the American Baptists. For fifty years, he was a laborious servant of their churches; and for more than half this period, he diligently devoted what time he could spare from professional duties, to historical researches. The vast fund of materials which he thus accumulated, must have sunk into entire oblivion, had it not been for his unwearied care. As a preacher he was entirely evangelical: pungency, pathos and power, characterized many of his discourses, which though unornamented with rhetorical language, were richly stored with scriptural truth.

His unaffected piety, sincerity, and unwavering integrity, were proverbial among all that knew him. The following interesting reminiscence has been communicated by the worthy pastor of the church to which father Backus so long ministered.

"The following anecdote is sometimes related by the aged Christians in this region:—An unpleasant rupture took place between Rev. Mr. Alden, late of Bellingham, and a certain Mr. Mann, a member of his church. All attempts for a reconciliation were in vain. At length a number of ministers were called together for consultation and advice; among whom were Stillman, of Boston: Manning, of Providence: and Backus, of Middleborough. The conference was held at the house of Rev. W. Williams, in Wrentham, and they spent the afternoon and almost all the following night in their pious efforts; but the parties were unyielding, and there was not the least prospect of a settlement. For a long time Mr. Backus had sat with his head bowed down, and appeared to be sleeping. A little before break of day, (which is

said to be the darkest time,) Mr. B. rose up, saying,—*Let us look to the throne of grace once more;* and then kneeling down he prayed. The spirit and tone of his prayer was such as to make every one feel that the heart-searching God had come down among them. The result was, the contending parties began immediately to melt, and the rising sun saw the rupture healed and closed up forever.

"I have often heard that good man pray. The efficacy of his prayers did not consist in length, nor gaudy dress; but it seemed that he and his God loved one another, and that he was at home before the throne of grace. I heard the last sermon which he ever preached. It was delivered in his dwelling-house, from 1 Pet. ii. 9. I remember well the piety, pathos, and unusual earnestness which characterized that discourse. His religion made him willing to die.

S. H."

The following description of his person and manner, is from the pen of his intimate friend and contemporary, Dr. Thomas Baldwin of Boston.

"Mr. Backus's personal appearance was very grave and venerable. He was not far from six feet in stature, and in the latter part of life considerably corpulent. He was naturally modest and diffident; which probably led him into a habit, which he continued to the day of his death, of shutting his eyes, when conversing or preaching on important subjects. His voice was clear and distinct, but rather sharp than pleasant. In both praying and preaching, he often appeared to be favoured with such a degree of divine unction, as to render it manifest to all that God was with him. Few men have more uniformly lived and acted up to their profession than Mr. Backus. It may be truly said of him, that *he was a burning and shining light;* and, though dead, he left behind him the *good name which is better than precious ointment.*"

PREFACE.

THE experience of mankind, from age to age, gives the best light to direct our ways of any human means; and the record of the word of God is our only sure guide to eternal life. Comparing spiritual things with spiritual, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is the way to bring us to that happy end; and though the writings of all uninspired men are imperfect, yet by comparing their various accounts together, we may gain much instruction from them about the accomplishment of prophecy, and many other things.

These things were much upon my mind in early life, especially about the history of my own country. And when the knowledge of experimental religion was given me, above threescore years ago, it increased my attention to these things. But when some of our chief ministers requested me to engage to write our history, in 1771, the greatness of the work, and the difficulty of obtaining the necessary materials, were great objections in my way. Yet their importunity prevailed; and I spent much of my time in going to, and searching of the records of the old colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and of the United Colonies, which last are at Plymouth. I also searched many other records and papers, as well as books of various kinds, and inquired of intelligent persons, to get all the light I could from every quarter. And our first volume was published in

1777, the second in 1784, and the third in 1796; and I never heard of any thing published against the work, though I desired that it might be corrected.

As several things have come to light of late, that I had not before, and my ability for writing is continued to old age,* I have thought it to be [my] duty to reduce the most useful things into one volume, with a concise view of our Southern States, as well as to bring the history down to the present time. And as writers are often incorrect in their dates, I have paid much attention to that subject; and have given an exact table of events, according to what light I could gain, following the old style, until the new took place in 1752.

Many of the new things in this volume were taken from Winthrop's Journal, published in 1790; from the publications of the Historical Society at Boston, and from a book which I borrowed of them, called "The Bloody Tenet," of which I know not of another copy in America. The accounts of our Southern States were collected partly when I was in North Carolina and Virginia, in 1789, and partly from other sources of intelligence. And in the experience of two centuries, in this great country, we may see a great variety of different schemes of government that have been tried, which may direct our choice to what is right, and to avoid evil ways; especially to guard against all cruelty, deceit, and violence. These things are humbly presented to the public, by their aged friend, ISAAC BACKUS.

Middleborough, August 30, 1804.

* Eighty on January 20, 1804.

A

CHURCH HISTORY

OF

NEW ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

Their first church formed—They divide into two—They remove to Amsterdam—One goes to Leyden—They increase to three hundred—Part of them come to America—Here many of them die. Yet the rest are prospered—Robinson dies in Holland—Yet more come over—Their charter given—Their church order.

The light of revelation, and the superstitions and persecutions of the Church of England, were the causes of the first planting of New England. A number of people near the borders of the counties of York, Nottingham, and Lincoln, were so much convinced of the corruptions of the Church of England, that they withdrew from her in 1602, and formed another church, in which they covenanted together, to walk in all the ordinances and commandments of God, according to the light he had given, or should give them out of his holy word. But for so doing they were cruelly persecuted by the ruling powers of the national church. Yet they increased so much in about four years, as to divide into two churches; and this increased the resentment of their enemies so much, that they removed to Amsterdam, in 1608. One of these churches had the aged Mr. Richard Clifton, and Mr. John Robinson for their pastors; but Clifton died at Am-

sterdam.* And as contentions had broken out in the other church, Mr. Robinson and his people removed to Leyden, in 1609, though to their temporal disadvantage. There they lived in peace and harmony, and increased to three hundred communicants.

This caused much uneasiness in the Church of England, and many things were published against them. Mr. Richard Bernard of Nottinghamshire, in particular, wrote a large book against them, which Mr. Robinson answered in 1610; and he observes, that because one Bolton, in the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, formed a church in a way of separation from the Church of England, which persecution brought him to renounce, and afterwards to hang himself; and Robert Brown, a minister of that church, came out and formed several separate churches, and yet turned back again into the national church, Mr. Bernard brought these instances as arguments against all who separated from them. Upon which Robinson said, "The universal apostasy of all the bishops, ministers, students in the universities, yea, of the whole Church of England in Queen Mary's days, (a handful in comparison excepted,) might more colourably be urged by the papists against Mr. Bernard, than some few instances against us. The fall of Judas, an apostle; of Nicolas, one of the seven deacons; and of Demas, one of Paul's special companions in the ministry, sufficiently teach us that there is no cause so holy, nor calling so excellent, as not to be subject to the invasion of painted hypocrites."† And as Mr. Bernard referred to many evils in the primitive churches, as a plea that the Church of England might be a true church of Christ, notwithstanding all her corruptions, Robinson says, "It is true that the apostles mentioned them, but always with utter dislike, severe reproof, and strict charges to reform them. Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 1 Thess. v. 14. 2 Thess. iii. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 5. Rev. ii. 14—16. 20. But how doth this concern you? Though Paul and all the apostles with him; yea, though Christ himself from heaven should admonish any of your

* Prince's Chronology, 254. † Robinson, 53—55.

churches to put away any person, though never so heretical or flagitious, you could not do it."* "Your prelates govern, or rather reign, but teach not; your parish priests teach so much as they dare for fear of their imperious lords, but they govern not."† "Nothing hath more advanced the throne of antichrist in former days, nor doth more uphold it at this day, than the people's discharging themselves of the care of public affairs in the church, on the one side, and the priests and prelates arrogating all to themselves, on the other."‡ "And I doubt not but Mr. Bernard, and a thousand more ministers in the land, (were they secure from the magistrates' sword, and might they go on with good license,) would wholly shake off their canonical obedience to their ordinaries, and neglect their citations and censures, and refuse to sue in their courts, for all the peace of the church, which they commend to us for so sacred a thing."§

This remark was plainly verified in the vast numbers who afterwards came over to New England, who did not separate from the national church before they came away. The following account may give us some idea of his views of gospel doctrines. James Arminius, a professor of divinity in the University of Leyden, died there in 1609; but the opinions he had advanced have caused much controversy ever since. It was so sharp at Leyden in 1612, between the two professors in their university, that few of the disciples of the one would hear the other; but Mr. Robinson, though he preached thrice a week, and wrote sundry books, besides many other labours, yet went constantly to hear them both, whereby he was grounded in the controversy, and saw the force of all their arguments. And in 1613, Episcopius set forth sundry Arminian theses at Leyden, which he would defend in public against all opposers; upon which Polyander, and the chief preachers of the city, desired Mr. Robinson to dispute against him. But being a stranger, he was loath to engage. Yet the other telling him, that such was the ability and expertness of the adversary,

* Robinson, 82. † Ib. 359. ‡ Ib. 204. § Ib. 14.

that truth was in danger of suffering if he would not help them, he at length yields; and when the day came, he defended the truth and foiled the opposer, so as to put him to an apparent nonplus in a great and public audience. The same he does a second and a third time, upon like occasions; which caused many to praise God, and highly to esteem Mr. Robinson.*

Thus it appears that Mr. Robinson was a firm believer of those doctrines which are called Calvinism, while he was earnest for allowing all men liberty of conscience; and that the contrary behaviour of many was not owing to that plan of doctrine, but to other causes. For the rulers in Holland held firmly to that doctrine, and yet they established such religious liberty as was not then enjoyed in any other part of Europe. But though their religious privileges were great, yet many other things caused Mr. Robinson and his people to desire a removal to a better country. For most of them had been bred to husbandry, which they had not advantages to follow in Holland; and the language and manners of the Dutch were not agreeable to them; and their little regard to the Sabbath, and other religious duties, were offensive to them; and the climate of the country was not favourable to their health, but their children were oppressed with labour and disease, so as to abate the vigour of nature in early age; neither could they be willing to lose their interest in the English nation, and the government thereof, if they could obtain liberty of conscience from thence. And they believed that if they could have such liberty granted them in America, many would remove thither, who would enlarge the English dominions, and also spread the light of the gospel among the heathen. They therefore sent two agents to England in 1617, to petition for such liberties and privileges. And having received some encouragement from the council there, who had the care of the American affairs, Mr. Robinson and Elder Brewster wrote to them these encouraging considerations. "1. We verily believe and trust that the Lord is with us; to whom and whose service

* Prince's Chronology, p. 36. 38.

we have given ourselves in many trials, and that he will graciously prosper our endeavours according to the simplicity of our hearts. 2. We are well weaned from the delicate milk of our mother country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange land. 3. The people are, for the body of them, industrious and frugal, we think we may safely say, as any company of people in the world. 4. We are knit together as a body, in a most strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord; of the violation whereof we make great conscience, and by virtue whereof we hold ourselves straitly tied to all care of each other's good, and of the whole. 5. It is not with us, as with other men, whom small things can discourage, and small discouragements cause to wish ourselves at home again."*

Herein they were not mistaken, as will soon appear; for though contentions in said council, and other things, delayed their proceedings for three years, and they could not obtain a promise of liberty of conscience in this country, but only that the king would connive at them, and not molest them, if they carried peaceably, "yet, casting themselves on the care of Providence, they resolved to venture." But as they could not obtain help enough, from the merchant adventurers in England, to carry over half of their society at first, Mr. Robinson was obliged to stay with the majority in Holland, while Elder Brewster came with the rest to America. And before they came away Mr. Robinson gave them this solemn advice. Said he, "We are now to part asunder, and the Lord knoweth whether I shall live to see your faces again: but whether he hath appointed it or not, I charge you before God and his blessed angels, to follow me no further than I have followed Christ. And if God shall reveal any thing to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am very confident that the Lord has more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy word. Here he took occasion to bewail the state and condition of the reformed churches, who were come to a period in religion,

* Prince, p. 51, 52.

and would go no further than the instruments of their reformation. As for example, the Lutherans could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them, a misery much to be lamented; for though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them. And were they now living, they would be as ready and willing to embrace further light, as that they had received. And here I must put you in mind of our church covenant, wherein we promise and covenant with God and one another, to receive whatsoever light or truth that shall be made known to us from his written word. But withal I exhort you to take heed what you receive for truth, and well to examine and compare it with other Scriptures before you receive it; for it is not possible that the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."*

And after an affectionate parting, Mr. Robinson, on July 27, 1620, sent them the following letter:

"*Loving Christian Friends,*

"I do heartily, and in the Lord salute you, as being those with whom I am present in my best affections, and most earnest longing after you, though I be constrained for a while to be bodily absent from you: I say constrained; God knowing how willing, and much rather than otherwise, I would have borne my part with you in this first brunt, were I not by strong necessity held back for the present. Make account of me in the mean time as a man divided in myself, with great pain and as (natural bonds set aside) having my better part with you: and although I doubt not but in your godly wisdoms you both foresee and resolve upon that which concerneth your present state and condition, both severally and jointly; yet have I thought it but my duty to add some further

* Winslow against Gorton, p. 97, 98.

spur of provocation unto them who run already, if not because you need it, yet because I owe it in love and duty. And first, as we are daily to renew our repentance with our God, especially for our sins known, and generally for our unknown trespasses; so doth the Lord call us in a singular manner, upon occasions of such difficulty and danger as lieth upon you, to both a narrow search and careful reformation of your ways in his sight, lest he, calling to remembrance our sins forgotten by us, or unrepented of, take advantage against us, and in judgment leave us to be swallowed up in one danger or other. Whereas, on the contrary, sin being taken away by earnest repentance, and the pardon thereof from the Lord sealed up to a man's conscience by his Spirit, great shall be his security and peace in all dangers, sweet his comforts in all distresses, with happy deliverance from evil, whether in life or death.

"Now, next after this heavenly peace with God and our consciences, we are carefully to provide for peace with all men, what lieth in us, especially with our associates; and, for that watchfulness must be had, that we neither at all in ourselves do give, no, nor easily take offence being given by others. Wo be to the world for offences; for although it be necessary, considering the malice of Satan and men's corruptions, that offences come, yet wo unto the man, or woman either, by whom the offence cometh, saith Christ, Matt. xviii. 7. And if offences in the unseasonable use of things in themselves indifferent be more to be feared than death itself, as the apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. ix. 15, how much more in things simply evil, in which neither the honour of God, nor love to man is thought worthy to be regarded! Neither yet is it sufficient that we keep ourselves by the grace of God from giving offence, except withal we be armed against taking of them when they are given by others; for how imperfect and lame is the work of grace in that person, who wants charity to cover a multitude of offences! as the Scripture speaks. Neither are you to be exhorted to this grace, only upon common grounds of Christianity, which are, that persons ready to take offence either want charity to cover offences, or duly to weigh human frailties;

or, lastly, are gross though close hypocrites, as Christ our Lord teacheth, Matt. vii. 1—3. As, indeed, in my own experience, few or none have been found who sooner give offence, than such as easily take it; neither have they ever proved sound and profitable members in societies, who have nourished this touchy humour. But, besides these, there are divers motives provoking you above others to great care and conscience of this way; as first, there are many of you strangers as to the persons so to the infirmities of one another, and so stand in need of more watchfulness this way, lest when such things fall out in men and women as you expected not, you be inordinately affected with them, which doth require at your hands much wisdom and charity for the covering and preventing of incidental offences that way. And, lastly, your intended course of civil community* will minister continual occasion of offence, and be as fuel for that fire, except you diligently quench it with brotherly forbearance. And if taking offence causelessly or easily at man's doings, be so carefully to be avoided, how much more heed is to be taken that we take not offence at God himself! which we certainly do, so oft as we murmur at his providence in our crosses, or bear impatiently such afflictions wherewith he is pleased to visit us. Store up therefore patience against the evil day; without which we take offence at the Lord himself in his holy and just works. There is a fourth thing carefully to be provided for, viz.: That with your common employments you join common affections truly bent upon the general good, avoiding as a deadly plague of both your common and special comforts, all retiredness of mind for proper advantage, and all singularly affected every manner of way; let every man repress in himself, and the whole body in each person, as so many rebels against the common good, all private respects of men's selves, not sorting with the general convenience. And as men are careful not to have a new house shaken with violence, before it be well settled, and the parts firmly knit; so be you, I beseech you,

* For seven years their affairs were managed in one common stock.

brethren, much more careful that the house of God (which you are) be not shaken with unnecessary novelties, or other oppositions at the first settling thereof.

"Lastly, whereas you are to become a body politic, using civil government among yourselves, and are not furnished with special eminency above the rest, to be chosen by you into office of government; let your wisdom and godliness appear, not only in choosing such persons as do entirely love, and will promote the common good; but also in yielding unto them all due honour and obedience in their lawful administrations; not beholding in them the ordinariness of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good; not being like the foolish multitude, who honour the gay coat more than either the virtuous mind of the man, or the glorious ordinance of the Lord; but you know better things, and that the image of the Lord's power and authority, which the magistrate beareth, is honourable in how mean persons soever; and this duty you may the more willingly, and ought the more conscionably to perform, because you are (at least for the present) to have them for your ordinary governors, which yourselves shall make choice of for that work.

"Sundry other things of importance I could put you in mind of, and of those before mentioned in more words; but I will not so far wrong your godly minds, as to think you heedless of these things, there being also divers among you so well able both to admonish themselves and others of what concerneth them. These few things, therefore, and the same in a few words, I do earnestly commend to your care and conscience, joining therein with my daily incessant prayers unto the Lord, that he who made the heavens, and the earth, and sea, and all rivers of water, and whose providence is over all his works, especially over all his dear children for good, would so guide and guard you in your ways, as inwardly by his Spirit, so outwardly by the hand of his power, as that both you, and we also, for and with you, may have after matter of praising his name all the days of your and our lives. Fare you well in him in whom you trust, and

in whom I rest, an unfeigned well-wisher to your happy success in your hopeful voyage. JOHN ROBINSON."*

This they received at Southampton in England; and these excellent instructions had lasting influence upon their posterity. Two ships had been provided to carry them to America, but after sailing twice, and turning back, one of them was left and the other sailed from Plymouth, September 6, and landed on Cape Cod, November 11. And as this was northward of where they had any patent, they drew a covenant for their civil government, which was signed before they landed, by John Carver, William Bradford, Edward Winslow, Isaac Allerton, William Brewster, Miles Standish, John Alden, Samuel Fuller, and thirty-three more, their whole number being 101 souls. Mr. Carver was chosen their governor; and they had a tedious time to find out a place to settle in; but on December 16, 1620, the ship came into the harbour which they called Plymouth, and then they had to build themselves habitations, in a cold winter season, without any friend to help them. They intended to have gone to Hudson's river, but the Dutch had hired the master of the ship deceitfully to prevent it; though God meant it for their good; for the Indians were numerous there, while there were none here. A great sickness a few years before had laid this place desolate, and had swept off most of the Indians for forty miles round, so that those who remained were glad of their help against the Narragansets, where the sickness did not reach; and here were fields ready cleared for them, who had no cattle to help them till several years after.

How wonderful are the works of God! Yea, and his judgments are a great deep; for by reason of their long voyage, and the difficulties of the winter following, without good accommodations, near half of their company died in six months, among whom was Governor Carver and his wife. Yet the survivors were wonderfully supported, and the chief sachem of the Indians in these parts

* Morton, p. 7—10.

came to Plymouth, in March, 1621, and entered into a friendly covenant with them, which lasted all their days. Afterwards some friends in England wrote to them, and said, "we are still persuaded, you are the people that must make a plantation, and erect a city in those remote places, when all others fail."* And they will be remembered to the latest posterity.

Massassoit, the sachem who had made a league with them, having found out a plot which was laid against the English in the spring of 1623, by some Indians in Massachusetts bay, informed our fathers of Plymouth of it, and advised them to cut off a few leaders in it, whom he named, which they did, and so the plot was entirely crushed.† Such a scarcity also came upon them in that year, that they had no bread at Plymouth from the time of their planting until their corn was grown; but they lived upon fish, deer, fowls, and ground nuts. And to add to their trials, a great drought came on with heat, from the third week in May to the middle of July, so that their corn withered as if it were dead; and a ship which they had long expected did not arrive, but they thought they saw signs of its being wrecked on the coasts. This was distressing indeed; but their authority set apart a day of fasting and prayer to seek help from their God, and they found it was not in vain; for though the former part of the day was clear and hot, yet before their exercise was over the clouds gathered, and distilled next morning in gentle showers, and so for fourteen days together, which revived their corn and other fruits, so that they had a plentiful harvest. And soon after, the ship which they expected arrived, and another in a few days, wherein came sixty of their friends.‡ And they never had such scarcity afterwards.

Mr. Robinson and the most of his people were detained in Holland, until, after a short sickness, he died there on March 1, 1625, in the fiftieth year of his age, greatly lamented by his people both there and here. His family

* Historical Society, vol. iii. p. 33.
† Prince, p. 129—133. ‡ Ib. p. 137—139.

came over afterwards, and his son Isaac lived to be above ninety years old, and left male posterity in the county of Barnstable. The company of adventurers in England would not be at the expense of conveying these and others from Leyden, and yet demanded the pay for their former expenses. Therefore, in 1628, their friends here engaged to do it, when William Bradford, Miles Standish, Isaac Allerton, Edward Winslow, William Brewster, John Howland, John Alden, and Thomas Prince, with four friends in London, after having the trade of this colony secured to them, undertook to pay the debts of the colony in England, which were eighteen hundred pounds sterling, and also to bring those friends over.* And in August, 1629, thirty-five families arrived at Plymouth, from Leyden, the transporting of whom cost five hundred and fifty pounds sterling, besides supporting of them above a year more, till they had a harvest of their own, all which was freely given them.† A wonderful instance of Christian generosity.

On January 13, 1630, the council for New England gave a patent to William Bradford and his associates and assigns of all that part of New England between Cohasset rivulet towards the north, and Narraganset river towards the south, the western ocean towards the east, and between a straight line directly extending up into the main land toward the north from the mouth of Narraganset river, to the utmost bounds of a country in New England, called Pacanokit, alias Swamset, westward, and another straight line extending directly from the mouth of Cohasset river towards the west, so far into the main land westward as to the utmost limits of the said Pacanokit or Swamset extend; and also a tract of land extending fifteen miles wide on each side of Kennebeck river, &c.‡ and this continued a distinct government until 1692. In 1621, they chose a governor and one assistant with him; in 1624, they chose five assistants; and in 1633, they chose a governor and seven assistants, and continued that number as long as they remained a distinct government.

* Historical Collections at Boston, 1794, p. 61.
† Prince, p. 168. 192. ‡ Ib. p. 196, 197.

As to the government of the church, they held the power to be in each particular church, to receive and exclude members, and to choose and ordain officers, though they would act in fellowship with sister churches. As to officers, they held to having pastors, ruling elders, and deacons. Their ruling elders were to have the gifts of public teachers, but not to administer the ordinances of baptism and the holy supper. Such was Mr. William Brewster, from their first coming to this land, until he died in 1644. They also held that every brother in the church might improve his gifts in public teaching, if he had gifts that could edify the brethren, to whom they were to be subject. Some of their proofs for it were these: One apostle says, "he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. And ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." 1 Cor. xiv. 3. 31. And another says, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.* Though they took much pains, yet they never obtained a pastor here, until Mr. Ralph Smith came over with the Salem company, in 1629, and not being wanted there, he came that year to Plymouth, and was their pastor about six years.

* Robinson against Bernard, 235.

CHAPTER II.

A church settled at Salem—Governor Winthrop comes over with their charter—Church and State united—Williams banished—His great service in the Pequot war—A synod at Cambridge—A new court called, who punished many whom the synod had condemned.

After our fathers at Plymouth, through great dangers and difficulties, had prepared the way, many who disliked the corruptions and oppressions in the Church of England made preparations for a removal into this country. Mr. John White, a minister at Dorchester in England, prevailed with a number of wealthy men to write over to Roger Conant and others, who were scattered in different places, to repair to Cape Ann, and they would send over money and goods to assist them in planting and fishing; and they did so with success. And on March 19, 1628, the council for the affairs of New England sold to a number of men, their heirs and associates, that part of New England which lies between lines drawn three miles north of every part of Merrimack river, and three miles south of every part of Charles river and Massachusetts bay, and extending west from the Atlantic ocean to the south sea. And they sent over Mr. John Endicot as governor of said people, who made Salem to be their chief town; and on March 4, 1629, King Charles granted the Massachusetts charter, including all the lands before described, to be holden of him and his heirs and successors. And Mr. Francis Higginson and Samuel Skelton, with two other ministers and above three hundred persons with them, came over to Salem, and gathered a church, and ordained these two ministers on August 6, 1629, and also a ruling elder; and they received the right hand of fellowship from the church of Plymouth the same day.* So early did they join with those here, whom many had censured

* Prince, p. 83. 190, 191.

for separating from the church of England in their native country.

And on June 12, 1630, Governor Winthrop arrived at Salem; and about fifteen hundred people came over that year, bringing the Massachusetts charter with them, and the churches of Boston, Dorchester, and Watertown, were soon formed and organized like Salem, as Charlestown also was in 1632. At first they received members by a general declaration of their faith, and the discovery of a regular walk; but they afterwards required of each one an account of a change of heart by the work of God's Spirit. Mr. John Wilson was the first pastor of the church of Charlestown and Boston, who was ordained, with a ruling elder and two deacons, August 27, 1630. Governor Winthrop says, "We used imposition of hands, but with this protestation by all, that it was only a sign of election and confirmation, not of any intent that Mr. Wilson should renounce his ministry he received in England."* But he afterwards informs us, that when a minister had resigned his pastoral charge of any church, he was then "no minister," by the received determination of their churches; and also that they did not allow any elders to lay on hands in ordinations, but those who were of the church where the ordination was.† But in 1648, that liberty was granted in their platform.

The General Court at Boston, May 18, 1631, made a law that no man should hereafter be admitted as a freeman, to have a vote in their government, but a member in some of their churches. On Sept. 4, 1633, arrived a ship, in which came John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, and Samuel Stone, ministers, and John Haynes, afterwards Governor of Massachusetts, and then of Connecticut. Mr. Cotton was soon settled in the ministry, at Boston, where he had as much influence, both in the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the country, as any one man therein, for near twenty years, till he died. But Mr. Hooker could not agree with him in some things of great importance, though he did in others. Hooker and Stone settled first at Cam-

* Journal, p. 20. † Ib. p. 227. 268.

bridge, and then removed with many others to Hartford, in 1636, and were leaders in the colony of Connecticut, where men were received to be freemen who were not members of their churches. They also held that none had a right to bring their children to baptism but communicants, while Cotton was for others doing it, if they were not scandalous. And he was for carrying the power of councils higher than Hooker would.

Governor Winthrop gives the following account of the manner of their forming churches, and receiving members into them, which was soon established. It was, that where a church was designed to be gathered, their chief rulers and ministers must be convened, and those who were to be the first members of the church were to tell their experiences before them, and have their approbation, or else they were not to proceed. Of this he relates the following example. In 1635, the most of the church in Dorchester, with their minister, removed up, and planted Windsor, and began the colony of Connecticut; in which year Mr. Richard Mather came over and settled in Dorchester. And on April 11, 1636, many rulers and ministers met there for the purpose of forming a new church; but it was not done, because the most of those who intended to be members were thought not meet at present to be the foundation of a church, because they had built their hopes of salvation upon unsound grounds, viz.: "Some upon dreams and ravishes of spirit by fits; others upon the reformation of their lives; others upon duties and performances, &c. wherein they discovered three special errors. 1. That they had not come to hate sin because it is filthy, but only left it because it is hurtful. 2. That by reason of this they had never truly closed with Christ, (or rather Christ with them,) but had made use of him only to help the imperfection of their sanctification and duties, and not made him their sanctification, wisdom, &c. 3. They expected to believe by some power of their own, and not only and wholly from Christ." These are the views that Governor Winthrop had of Christian experiences, and of how churches should be

gathered. And satisfaction was gained the fall after, when a church was gathered there.*

Perhaps he, and many rulers and teachers among them, were as wise and pious men as any who ever undertook to establish religion upon earth by human laws, enforced by the sword of the magistrate; and the evils which they ran into ought to be imputed to that principle, and not to any others which they held that were agreeable to the gospel. But as their persecutors in England were then exerting all their influence to bring these people again under their power in religious matters, they took such measures to defend themselves as cannot be justified; and as Mr. Roger Williams earnestly laboured to prevent those measures, and to promote the establishment of full liberty of conscience in this country, they bent all their power against him.

According to his own account, and good information from others, he was born in Wales, in 1599, and he had the early patronage of the famous Sir Edward Coke; was educated at the University of Oxford, and was introduced into the ministry in the Church of England. But he soon found that he could not in conscience conform to many things in their worship; therefore he came over to this country, and arrived at Boston, in February, 1631; and in April, he was called to preach at Salem; but as he had refused to commune with the church at Boston, and objected against the oaths which they took when they came out of England, and the force in religious affairs which they exercised here, the court at Boston wrote to Salem against him, upon which he went to Plymouth, where he preached above two years, and was highly esteemed by Governor Bradford and others. Mr. Prince supposed that he had taken the oath of a freeman at Boston, in May, 1631, because a man of his name is upon their records in that month; but this was an evident mistake, and I found a Roger Williams upon their records the fall before this minister came to America. As these colonies had received the grant of American lands from the kings

* Winthrop, p. 98. 105.

of England, Mr. Williams wrote his thoughts against it while he lived at Plymouth, which some liked, and others did not; and as Mr. Skelton was sick at Salem, Williams was invited there to preach in his place, and he obtained a dismission in the summer of 1633, and preached there till Skelton died, August 2, 1634, after which he was ordained in Salem. He had spoken against the meeting of ministers by themselves, once a fortnight, fearing that it might grow in time to a presbytery or superintendency over the churches;* and greater difficulties soon followed.

Their charter gave them no power to make any laws contrary to the laws of England, and they had sworn to act accordingly; yet when they met at Boston, May 14, 1634, before they elected their officers, the assembly passed an act which said, "It was agreed and ordered, that the former oath of freemen shall be revoked, so far as it is dissonant from the oath of freemen hereunder written, and that those that received the former oath shall stand bound no further thereby, to any intent or purpose, than this new oath ties them that now take the same.

THE OATH OF A FREEMAN.

"I, A. B., being by God's providence an inhabitant and freeman in this Commonweal, do freely acknowledge myself to be subject to the government thereof, and therefore, do here swear by the great and dreadful name of the everliving God, that I will be true and faithful to the same, and will accordingly yield assistance and support hereunto with my person and estate as in equity I am bound, and will also truly endeavour to maintain and preserve all the liberties and privileges thereof; submitting myself to the wholesome laws and orders made and established by the same. And further, that I will not plot nor practise any evil against it, nor consent to any that shall so do; but will truly discover and reveal the same to lawful authority now here established, for the speedy preventing thereof. Moreover, I do solemnly bind myself in the sight of God,

* Winthrop, p. 57.

that when I shall be called to give my voice touching any such matters of this state wherein freemen are to deal, I will give my vote and suffrage as I shall judge in mine own conscience may best conduce and tend to the public weal of the body, without respect of persons or favour of any man; so help me God in the Lord Jesus Christ."

And it appears that they never acted any more in the name of the kings of England, until after 1660. And what a stretch of arbitrary power was this! Yet men might still choose whether they would take this oath or not, if they would be content not to be freemen. But when they met again, March 4, 1635, they enacted, "That every man of or above the age of sixteen years, who hath been or shall hereafter be resident within this jurisdiction by the space of six months, (as well servants as others,) and not infranchised, shall take the oath of residents, before the governor, deputy governor, or two of the next assistants, who shall have power to convent him for that purpose; and upon his refusal, to bind him over to the next court of assistants, and upon his refusal the second time to be punished at the discretion of the court. It is ordered that the freeman's oath shall be given to every man of or above the age of sixteen years, the clause for election of magistrates only excepted."

Now as this act was to bind all, Mr. Williams openly preached against it at Salem, for which the governor and assistants convented him before them on April 30; but he refused to retract what he had done, and Mr. Cotton says, "The court was forced to desist from that proceeding."* Indeed he calls it the first of these acts, but Governor Winthrop shews it to be the second.† And because of it, they at their meeting in May took away some land from Salem, by an act which said, "The land betwixt the Clift and the Forest river, near Marblehead, shall for the present be improved by John Humphrey, Esq.; and as the inhabitants of Marblehead shall stand in need of it, the said John Humphrey shall part with it, the said inhabitants allowing him equal recompense for his labour and cost

* Tenet washed, part second, p. 29. † Journal, p. 80.

bestowed thereupon; provided, that if in the mean time the inhabitants of Salem can satisfy the court that they have a true right unto it, that then it shall belong unto the inhabitants thereof." And how was that satisfaction to be given? Why, they gave up Mr. Williams in the fall after; and when the court met, March 3, 1636, they said, "It was proved this court that Marbleneck belongs to Salem."

Thus it stands upon their records, though Mr. Cotton pretends that Salem only petitioned for land in May, 1635; instead of their having some taken from them, until they gave him up. That act of taking land from them, appeared so evil to Mr. Williams and his church, that they wrote letters of reproof to the churches where those rulers belonged; upon which their rulers and ministers met in July, and gave Williams notice that he should be banished if he did not give them satisfaction; and Salem church yielded so much to them, that he left preaching to them in August. And when the court met in September, Governor Winthrop says, "Mr. Endicot made a protestation in justification of the letters formerly sent from Salem to other churches against the magistrates and deputies, for which he was committed, but the same day he came and acknowledged his fault, and was discharged."* He afterwards acted at the head of their government in hanging the Quakers; but as Williams remained steadfast, their records say,

"Whereas Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates, as also writ letters of defamation both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retraction; it is therefore ordered, that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing; which if he neglect to perform, it shall be lawful for the governor and two magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without leave from the court."

* Journal, p. 84. 86.

As he did not go, they sent for him to come to Boston, in January, 1636, but he sent an excuse for not coming; upon which they sent an officer to take him, and to convey him on board a ship bound for England; but when the officer got to Salem, he had been gone three days.* He first went to the place since called Rehoboth; but Governor Winslow wrote to him, that he was then within Plymouth colony, but if he would only go over the river, he would be out of it, and be as free as themselves. And he readily did so, and obtained a grant of lands from the Narraganset Indians, where he began the first civil government upon earth that gave equal liberty of conscience. Though before he obtained it, he says, "I was sorely tossed for fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean."† And from a view of the great things which God had done for him, he called the place PROVIDENCE.

The nature of true liberty of conscience was very little understood then in the world. And as God had brought the people here, out of an Egyptian bondage, and given them a good land, they imagined that they ought to imitate the children of Israel, in punishing the wicked, and in establishing a holy government in this great country. And from hence, they who opposed such a great and good work, appeared to them exceedingly criminal. A noted man, who was then active among them, thought that Christ called them, not only to assist in building up his churches, but also in pulling down the kingdom of antichrist; and that he said to them, "You are not set up for tolerating times, nor shall any of you be content with this, that you are set at liberty, but take up your arms, and march manfully on till all opposers of Christ's kingly power are abolished. Have you not the blessedest opportunity put into your hands that ever any people had? Then fail not in prosecution of the work, for your Lord hath furnished you with able pilots, to steer the helm in a godly, peaceable civil government also; then see that you make choice of such as are found both in profession and confession, men fearing God and hating bribes; whose commission is

* Journal, p. 92. † Historical Society, vol. i. p. 276.

not limited to the commands of the second table, but they are to look to the rules of the first also; and let them be sure to put on Joshua's resolution and courage, never to make a league with any of these seven sectaries. The Gortonists, who deny the humanity of Christ, and most blasphemously and proudly profess themselves to be personally Christ. 2. The Papists, who with almost equal blasphemy and pride prefer their own merits and works of supererogation as equal with Christ's invaluable death and sufferings. 3. The Familists, who depend upon rare revelations, and forsake the sure revealed word of Christ. 4. The Seekers, who deny the churches and ordinances of Christ. 5. Antinomians, who deny the moral law to be the rule of Christ. 6. Anabaptists, who deny civil government to be proved of Christ. 7. The Prelacy, who will have their own injunctions submitted unto in the churches of Christ."*

Here we may plainly learn the cause why Mr. Williams was treated so cruelly. But as God overruled the cruel selling of Joseph to the heathen, as a means of saving the lives of many people; so the banishing of Mr. Williams made him a chief instrument of saving all the English in New England from destruction. For he had obtained much knowledge of the Indian language, and friendship with them, when a war was ready to break out with the most powerful nation in the land. Of this a concise view was given, by Governor Trumbull and the general court of Connecticut, in 1774, in answer to a query from England, to know by what title they held their lands. Upon it, they said, "The original title to the lands on which the colony was first settled, was at the time the English came hither, in the Pequot nation of Indians, who were numerous and warlike; their country extended from Narraganset to Hudson's river, and over all Long Island. Sassacus, their great sagamore, had under him twenty-six sachems: he injuriously made war upon the English; he exercised despotic dominion over his subjects; he with all his sachems and people were conquered, and made tribu-

* Johnson, p. 7, 8.

taries to the English. The war being ended, considerations and settlements were made with such sachems and people as remained, who came in and received full contentment and satisfaction."*

Some Indians up Connecticut river had been so much oppressed by Sassacus, that they came down to Plymouth and Boston, so early as 1631, to get some of the English to go up and settle there.† And they afterwards went up to trade there several times, before they planted Windsor, and began a fort at Saybrook, in 1635, and Hartford in 1636. But the Pequots killed several men, from time to time, until they murdered John Oldham, near Block Island, because they went to trade that way. Mr. Williams began at Providence in the spring of 1636, just before Oldham was killed, the news of which they first received from him at Boston, July 26; upon which the governor there wrote to him to use all his influence with the Narragansets, to obtain their help against the Pequots. This he did so expeditiously, as to return their answer July 30. Messengers were then sent to the Narragansets, who returned to Boston with a favourable answer on August 13. An army was then sent round by water, to revenge the death of Oldham, and to try to bring the Pequots to terms; but they returned without success.‡ Upon a sight of their danger, the Pequots sent directly to the Narragansets, with whom they had been at war several years, and desired that they would make peace with them, and for all to join together, and to drive the English out of the country; saying, "If you should help the English to subdue us, you would thereby make way for your own ruin; and we need not come to open battle with them, but only fire their houses, kill their cattle, and lie in wait and shoot them as they go about their business, and they will soon be forced to leave the country, and the Indians not be exposed to much hazard."‖

What policy was here! and what would the English have done, if they had sent Williams out of the country

* Said answer, p. 4.
† Winthrop, p. 25.
‡ Winthrop, p. 103—105.
‖ Preface to Mason's History, p. 4.

as they intended? But a kind Providence prevented it, and he now wrote an account of these things to Boston; upon which they sent to him, to do his utmost for their relief; and he says, "The Lord helped me immediately to put my life in my hand, and, scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself all alone in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind with great seas, every minute in hazard of life, to the sachem's house. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequot ambassadors, whose hands and arms methought reeked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut river, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also. But God wonderfully preserved me, and helped me to break to pieces their design, and to make, promote, and finish, by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansets and Mohegans against the Pequots."* He prevailed with Miantenimo, the chief sachem of the Narragansets, to come to Boston, in October, and to covenant with them to war against the Pequots till they were subdued; and they sent a copy of it to Mr. Williams, who could best interpret it to him.†

Uncas, the sachem of the Mohegans, who lived between New London and Norwich, had revolted from the Pequots a little before, and now joined against them; and the colonies agreed to raise an army against them in the spring.

But the Pequots were too early for them, and sent an army up the river in April, and killed several, and captivated others; upon which Connecticut raised an army of ninety English, and a hundred Mohegan Indians, who went down to Saybrook, where Captain Underhill joined them with nineteen men, upon which twenty of the others were sent back, and then the army sailed to the Narraganset bay, under the command of Captain John Mason of Windsor. After they landed, many of the Narragansets joined them, and they marched over Pawcatuck river, and encamped in the night; but the Narra-

* Historical Society, vol. i. p. 277. † Winthrop, p. 109, 110.

gansets were so much afraid of the Pequots, that they all forsook the English, and the Mohegans went behind them. Yet Captain Mason and his men assaulted Mistick fort in Stonington, a little before day, May 26, 1637, and by fire and sword destroyed six or seven hundred Pequots, in about an hour, when only seven were captivated, and about seven escaped; while he had but two men killed, and twenty wounded.* Sassacus was at another fort, where some of his own men were for killing him, because he had caused this dreadful war; but others pleaded for him, though they all concluded to flee over Connecticut river. After which General Stoughton came up with 120 men, and Mason and part of his men joined him, and they pursued the Pequots beyond New Haven, and Sassacus fled to the Mohawks, who cut off his head, and informed the English of it. So many Pequots were slain or captivated, that the rest sued for peace, which was granted upon condition of their quitting their name, and former habitations, and being dispersed among the Mohegans and Narragansets, who should pay an annual tribute for them, while others were servants to the English.

All this was accomplished in about six months, as appears by the journal of Governor Winthrop, the history of Captain Mason, and other accounts; and Indian sachems came to Boston, 1638, from all the country, as well as from Long Island, to express their gratitude to the English for this victory, as Governor Winthrop informs us. And Captain Mason says in his history, that they had but about two hundred and fifty men in all Connecticut, when the war began, and they were in the midst of those enemies. How wonderful then was their victory, which opened a wide door for the English to fill the country! Governor Eaton and Mr. Davenport, who came over in the time of the war, went and planted New Haven, in 1638, and began another colony, who allowed none to be freemen but communicants in their churches. About three thousand people came over that year; and it was computed that from 1628 to 1643, about twenty-one

* Mason's History, p. 10.

thousand two hundred persons came over here ;* and very few of them had separated from the church of England before they came away. This fully verified what Mr. Robinson said, twenty years before Boston was planted ; and it shows how men are influenced in religious matters by the government which they are under.

An act of justice now towards the Indians, served greatly to confirm their friendship. For four young men ran away from Plymouth, and meeting with an Indian near Providence, with a rich pack upon his back, they murdered him for it, and then fled to Rhode Island. Mr. Williams informed Governor Winthrop of it, who advised him to write to Plymouth about it, which he did, and they sent to Rhode Island, and caught three of them, and hanged them at Plymouth. And though some might think it strange, that three English should be executed for one Indian, yet none can tell how many lives this saved afterwards.

Yet all the great services which Mr. Williams did for Massachusetts, could not prevail with them to take off his sentence of banishment, though Governor Winthrop was for it. A fear of their enemies in England had a great hand in this ; for on April 28, 1634, King Charles gave a commission to Archbishop Laud, and eleven men more, to revoke all the charters which he had given to these colonies, and to make such new constitutions and laws as they thought meet for them ; and also to displace their governors and other officers, and to appoint others in their room ; to impose tithes for the clergy, and to punish all those who disobeyed them with fines, imprisonment, or death. And though Governor Winslow was sent over their agent, and got this commission revoked, yet Laud caused him to be imprisoned in London seventeen weeks, for teaching sometimes at Plymouth, and for marrying people as a magistrate, which Laud called an invasion of the ministerial office.† And to guard against such tyranny, was of great importance. Another reason was, that they expected to obtain so much power here, as to give a wound to anti-

* Johnson, p. 31. † Historical Society, vol. iv. p. 119, 120.

christ in other countries. For a man who was well acquainted with their views, speaking of the man of sin, says, "Mr. John Cotton, among others, hath diligently searched for the Lord's mind herein, and hath declared some sudden blow to be given to this bloodthirsty monster; but the Lord Christ hath inseparably joined the time, means, and manner of this work together."*

The planting of this country and the great things which God hath done here, has evidently given much light to Europe, and weakened the power of antichrist there; but the use of force in religious affairs, has been so far from weakening that enemy, that his main strength lies therein. But Massachusetts still went on in that way, and on March 3, 1636, they said, "This court doth not nor will hereafter approve of any such companies of men, as shall henceforth join in any way of church fellowship without they shall first acquaint the magistrates, and the elders of the greater part of the churches of this jurisdiction, and have their approbation herein. And further it is ordered, that no person, being a member of any church which shall hereafter be gathered without the approbation of the magistrates and the greater part of the said churches, shall be admitted to the freedom of this commonwealth." And when they met at Boston, May 25, 1636, Henry Vane, Esq. was chosen governor, and John Winthrop deputy governor; and he and Dudley were elected to be a standing council for life, and the governor for the time being was to be their president. Endicott was also chosen a counsellor for life the next year; for which their charter gave no right, and no others were ever elected so among them. Five rulers and three ministers were also now appointed, "To make a draught of laws which may be the fundamentals of this commonwealth, and to present the same to the next general court; and it is ordered that in the mean time the magistrates and their associates shall proceed in the courts, to hear and determine all causes according to the laws now established; and where there is no law, then as near the laws of God as they can."

* Johnson, p. 230.

So that when their laws were made, their judges were to act thereby in religious affairs, instead of the laws of God. But what followed among them may be a warning to all after ages, against confounding church and state together in their government. For disputes and divisions about grace and works, between their chief rulers and ministers, came on in Boston, and spread through all the country to a great degree. A fast was appointed on account of it, on January 19, 1637; but Mr. Wheelwright then preached a sermon which increased their difficulties, for which he was called before their general court, March 9, who dismissed him for the present; and when they met May 17, after a sharp contention, Mr. Winthrop was again chosen governor, and Mr. Vane was left out of office, and the case of Wheelwright was again deferred. A synod of ministers from all the colonies met at Cambridge, August 30, and sat three weeks, and drew up a list of eighty errors which they said were held in the country; and then the general court met September 26, and again dismissed Mr. Wheelwright, and dissolved the house of deputies, and called another for November 2, 1637. Such an instance as never was here before or since, of electing the house of deputies twice in one fall. The house they dissolved had twenty-six deputies, and the new one thirty-one, only eleven of whom were in that which was dissolved.

And now they had a majority to punish those whom the synod had condemned; and they went on to banish John Wheelwright, William Aspinwall, Ann Hutchinson, and others, and to disarm seventy-six men, fifty-eight of whom were of Boston. Of these Mr. Wheelwright and some others went and planted Exeter in New Hampshire, and were dismissed and recommended to form a church there, from the church in Boston;* though Mr. Williams was excommunicated by the church in Salem, after he had been banished by the court, for things that Governor Winthrop judged to be less dangerous than the other was

* Belknap's New Hampshire, vol. i. p. 37.

guilty of.* Wheelwright was banished for what they judged to be sedition and contempt of their government, and Williams for denying that they had any right to make laws, and enforce them with the sword in religious affairs. Wheelwright afterwards made a slight confession to them, and was restored to favour, but Williams never retracted his opinion about liberty of conscience, therefore they never would restore him. And how many have there been ever since, who have been more earnest for the use of force in religious affairs, than for the peace and good order of civil government! but wise men learn much by the mistakes of others. Mr. John Haynes was governor of Massachusetts in 1635, and pronounced the sentence of banishment on Williams: but he removed to Hartford in the spring of 1637, where he afterwards said to Williams, "I think I must confess to you, that the most wise God hath provided and cut out this part of his world for a receptacle and refuge for all sorts of consciences. I am now under a cloud, and my brother Hooker, with the Bay, as you have been; we have removed from them thus far, and yet they are not satisfied."† This confirms what was before said of the difference between the Massachusetts and Connecticut governments.

In September, 1638, Massachusetts made a law to compel all the inhabitants in each town to pay an equal proportion towards the support of religious ministers, though none had a vote in choosing them but communicants in their churches. And they then made another law, which said, "That whosoever shall stand excommunicated for the space of six months, without labouring what in him or her lieth to be restored, such person shall be presented to the court of assistants, and there proceeded with by fine, imprisonment, banishment, or farther for the good behaviour, as their contempt and obstinacy upon full hearing shall deserve." But this act was so high and glaring that it was repealed the next year. In the mean

* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 71.
† Historical Society, vol. i. p. 280.

time, as adultery was a capital crime by the law of Moses, a law to punish it with death was made at Boston, in 1631, and three persons were banished for it in 1638, and a man and a woman were hanged for it in 1644.

CHAPTER III.

Rhode Island planted—Their first government—Providence upon another plan—The Baptist church there—Their sentiments spread—Account of Knollys—A law against the Baptists—And writings, also—Men in England against them—The case of Gorton and his company—Indians against them—They are banished, but obtain relief from England—Williams obtains a new charter, and writes against persecution, and Cotton against him—Owen for him—These colonies for severity; but Robinson for liberty.

When such cruelty was exercised at Boston, Mr. John Clarke, his brother Joseph, and many others concluded to remove away; and when they came to Providence, Mr. Williams advised them to go to the island of Aquidnet; and he went with them to Plymouth, to inquire whether they claimed it or not; and finding that they did not, many went there, and signed a covenant on March 7, 1638, in which they said, "We whose names are underwritten, do here solemnly, in the presence of Jehovah, incorporate ourselves into a body politic, and as he shall help, will submit our persons, lives, and estates, unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and to all those perfect and most absolute laws of his, given us in his holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby. William Coddington, John Clarke, William Hutchinson, John Cogshall, *William Aspinwall*, *Thomas Savage*, William Dyre, William Freeborne, Philip Sherman, John Walker, Richard Carder, William Baulstone, *Edward*

Exodus, xxxiv. 3, 4.
2 Chron. xi. 3.
2 Kings, xi. 17.

Hutchinson, *Edward Hutchinson, junior*, Samuel Wilbore, John Sanford, John Porter, Henry Bull."

This I copied from their records. Those whose names are in *Italic* afterwards went back, and were reconciled to Massachusetts; and most of the others were of note on the island, which they called Rhode Island. Their covenant to be governed by the perfect laws of Christ as a body politic, seemed to be preferable to the scheme of Massachusetts; yet as they could not find laws to govern such a body in the New Testament, they went back to the laws of Moses, and elected a judge and three elders to rule them. And an assembly of their freemen, on January 2, 1639, said, "That the judge, together with the elders, shall rule and govern according to the general rules of the word of God, when they have no particular rule from God's word, by the body prescribed as a direction unto them in the case." But on March 12, 1640, they changed their plan of government, and elected a governor, and four assistants; and they went on till they disfranchised four men, and suspended others from voting in their elections; afterwards Mr. Williams went over to England, and obtained a charter which included them in his government.

He had procured a deed of Rhode Island for them, from the Narraganset sachems, on March 24, 1638; and another to himself of Providence, the same day. He and a few friends had been there for two years before; and when he had obtained a deed of the town, he gave a deed to Stukely Westcoat, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Green, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Western, Richard Waterman, Ezekiel Holiman, and such others as the major part of them should admit into fellowship and vote with them.

To these he gave a right in the town freely; but they who were received afterwards, were to pay him thirty shillings a piece. And they were Chad Brown, William Field, Thomas Harris, William Wickenden, Robert Williams, Richard Scott, William Renolds, John Field, John Warner, Thomas Angell, Benedict Arnold, Joshua

Winsor, Thomas Hopkins, Francis Weeks, &c. They all signed a covenant which said,

"We whose names are underwritten, being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves in active or passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for the public good of the body in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit unto the same, *only in civil things*." And I found a record afterward, which said, "It was agreed that Joshua Verin, upon breach of covenant, or restraining liberty of conscience, shall be withheld from liberty of voting till he shall declare the contrary." He restrained his wife from going to meeting as often as she desired; and upon this act against him he removed away, as their records show.

And the men who were for such liberty, soon formed the first Baptist church in America. Mr. Williams had been accused before of embracing principles which tended to anabaptism; and in March, 1639, he was baptized by one of his brethren, and then he baptized about ten more. But in July following, such scruples were raised in his mind about it, that he refrained from such administrations among them.* Mr. Williams discovers in his writings, that as sacrifices and other acts of worship were omitted by the people of God, while his temple lay in ruins; and that they were restored again by immediate direction from Heaven, so that some such direction was necessary to restore the ordinances of baptism and the supper, since the desolation of the church in mystical Babylon.† But these cases are far from being parallel; for the altar of God in one place in the land of Canaan, was the only place where acceptable sacrifices could then be offered; while the Christian church is not confined to any place, but Christ is with his saints wherever they meet in his name; and he says to his ministers, Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

* Winthrop, p. 174. 183. † Reply to Cotton, p. 107.

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen. Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 19, 20. And these promises belong only to the children of God, in the way of observing all his commandments, let them be ordained by whom they may. As the priests who could not find a *register* of their lawful descent from Aaron were put from the *priesthood;* so those who are *born again* are the only *priesthood* whom Christ owns under the gospel. Ezra ii. 62. 1 Pet. i. 23; xi. 9.

After Mr. Williams left that church in Providence, they chose Mr. Thomas Olney for their pastor, and he served them in that office until he died, in 1682; and through many trials and changes they have continued ever since, and are now a flourishing church. Others had much labour about baptism in these times. Mr. Charles Chauncy preached at Plymouth above two years, and they would fain have settled him with Mr. Reyner, their other minister; but he believed that gospel baptism was dipping, and that sprinkling for baptism was not *lawful*, as their records show. He therefore went to Scituate, where he practised the dipping of infants.* He was afterwards president of the college at Cambridge. Governor Winthrop also says, "The lady Moody, a wise and anciently religious woman, being taken with the error of denying baptism to infants, was dealt with by many of the elders and others, and admonished by the church of Salem, whereof she was a member; but persisting still, and to avoid further trouble, she removed to the Dutch, against the advice of all her friends. Many others, infected with anabaptism, removed thither also." They went to the west part of Long Island, where Mr. Williams went in 1643, and made peace between the Indians and the Dutch, and then sailed for England.†

Mr. Hanserd Knollys was a minister in the church of England for nine years, and then he was so cruelly persecuted therein, that he came over to Boston in the spring

* Winthrop, p. 200. 251. † Winthrop, p. 273. 298, 299.

of 1638; but their rulers called him an Antinomian, and would not suffer him there; therefore he went to Dover on Piscataqua river, where he preached near four years, and then returned to England, and arrived in London in December, 1641. As the war broke out there the next year, liberty for various opinions was caused thereby, and he became a Baptist, and gathered a church in London, where he often had a thousand hearers. He baptized Mr. Henry Jessy, an eminent minister in that city, and was one who signed the Baptist confession of faith in 1643, which was as clear in the doctrines of the gospel, as was that of the divines at Westminster; a copy of which Mr. Crosby has given at the end of the first volume of his history. He also informs us that Mr. Knollys continued a faithful pastor of his church in London, through great changes and sufferings, until he died in peace, September 19, 1691, aged 93 years. And though many things were published against him here, yet Dr. Mather says, "He had a respectful character in the churches of this wilderness."* And Mr. John Clarke was a preacher of the gospel at Newport, until he formed a Baptist church there in 1644, which has continued by succession ever since. But Massachusetts was so much afraid of the spread of their principles, that they made a law in November that year, which said,

"Forasmuch as experience hath plentifully and often proved, that since the first rising of the Anabaptists, about one hundred years since, they have been the incendiaries of the commonwealths, and the infectors of persons in main matters of religion, and the troublers of churches in all places where they have been, and that they who have held the baptizing of infants unlawful, have usually held other errors or heresies together therewith, though they have (as other heretics use to do) concealed the same till they spied out a fit advantage and opportunity to vent them, by way of question or scruple; and whereas divers of this kind have, since our coming to New England, appeared amongst ourselves, some whereof (as others be-

* Magnalia, book iii. p. 7.

fore them) denied the ordinance of magistracy, and the lawfulness of making war, and others the lawfulness of magistrates, and their inspection into the breach of the first table; which opinions, if they should be connived at by us, are like to be increased amongst us, and so must necessarily bring guilt upon us, infection and trouble to the churches, and hazard to the whole commonwealth; it is ordered and agreed, that if any person or persons, within this jurisdiction, shall either openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance, or shall deny the ordinance of magistracy, or their lawful right and authority to make war, or to punish the outward breaches of the first table, and shall appear to the court wilfully and obstinately to continue therein, after due time and means of conviction, every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment."

Thus denying infant baptism was made a cause of banishment, by men who knew that many who did so, did not hold the errors mentioned in this law. And Mr. Cotton said in those times, "they do not deny magistrates, nor predestination, nor original sin, nor maintain free-will in conversion, nor apostasy from grace; but only deny the lawful use of the baptism of children, because it wanteth a word of commandment and example from the Scripture. And I am bound in Christian love to believe, that they who yield so far, do it out of conscience, as following the example of the apostle, who professed of himself and his followers, We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. But yet I believe withal, that it is not out of love to the truth that Satan yieldeth so much, but rather out of another ground, and for a worse end. He knoweth that now, by the good hand of God, they are set upon purity and reformation; and now to plead against the baptism of children upon any of those Arminian and Popish grounds, as those above named, Satan knoweth they would be rejected. He now pleadeth no other arguments in these times of

reformation, than may be urged from a main principle of reformation, to wit, That no duty of God's worship, nor any ordinance of religion, is to be administered in his church, but such as hath a just warrant from the word of God. And by urging this argument against the baptism of children, Satan transformeth himself into an angel of light."*

Here we may see that Mr. Cotton knew the Baptists among them were not such as are described in the above law; though his charity about them was, that they were deceived by the devil, in pleading plain Scripture against infant baptism, which hath no precept nor example for it in the word of God. And another minister near him, in writing then against the Baptists, ranks them with our first mother Eve, and says, "*Hath God said it?* was the old serpentine insinuation to blind and beguile, and to corrupt first the judgment in point of warrant of this or that practice."† As if a calling in question a custom of men, which is not named in the word of God, was as criminal and dangerous as a disputing the authority and truth of his express command. Of this every one must judge for himself. The Presbyterian assembly of divines at Westminster now denied liberty to their Congregational brethren in England, to have gathered churches there, distinct from their parish churches; and said to them, "This liberty was denied by the churches of New England, and we have as just ground to deny it as they: this desired forbearance is a perpetual drawing away from churches under the rule; for upon the same pretence, those who scruple infant baptism may withdraw from their churches, and so separate into another congregation; and so in that, some practice may be scrupled, and they separate again."‡ Such is the effect of the use of force in religious affairs. And it now caused much trouble to Massachusetts, from men who were really very corrupt in doctrines.

Samuel Gorton had considerable knowledge of the

* Cotton on Baptism, 1647, p. 3. † Cobbet on Baptism, p. 8.
‡ Crosby, vol. i. p. 186, 187.

Hebrew and Greek languages, which he made use of to corrupt the word of God. He held the coming and sufferings of Christ to be within his children, and that he was as much in this world at one time as another; or that all which we read about him is to be taken in a mystical sense, which he called spiritual sense. And of the visible church, he says, "Pharisaical interpreters, who erect churches as true churches of God, that admit of decay, and falling from God in whole, or any part thereof, are they who have deceived and undone the world from the foundation thereof unto this day, and are the proper witches of the world, which the Scripture intends." Again he says, "They can strain out the gnat of dipping into, or sprinkling with water in the entrance into their church." And he says, "Antichrist is not to be confined to any one particular man or devil, but every one of that spirit is the original and proper inlet of sin, and inundation of God's wrath into the world. 1 John ii. 18. 22. Neither is the disposition, office, and authority of the Son of God confined and limited to one man; but every one that is of that spirit, hath that royal prerogative or set in him to be the Son of God, even so many as believe in that name." John i. 12.*

And his practice was no better than his principles. For he came over to Boston in 1636, where he caused considerable trouble, and then did the like at Plymouth, from whence he went to Newport, and behaved so there, that they inflicted corporeal punishment upon him. He then went and bought some land near Pawtuxet river, in the south part of Providence, in January, 1641; but such contention soon arose among neighbours there, about earthly things, that they came armed into the field to fight; but Mr. Williams interposed and pacified them for the present, and then wrote to Boston for advice and help. This was not granted from thence, unless they would come under the Massachusetts government. And as difficulties continued great in that place, four men went from Pawtuxet to Boston, in September, 1642, and sub-

* Antidote against Pharisaical teachers, p. 42. 60, 61.

mitted themselves and their lands under that government; and then their rulers wrote to Gorton and others to come to Boston, and answer to the complaints of these men. But they were so far from going, that they wrote a long letter, containing a mystical paraphrase upon their writing, and many provoking sentences against said rulers, and their religious principles and conduct, and a refusal to go, dated November 20, 1642, signed by twelve men. And to get out of their reach, these men went over the river, and bought the lands at Shawomet, of the Indians, and received a deed of it, January 12, 1643, signed by Miantanimo and Pumham.

In May following the general court at Boston sent men into those parts; and finding that Gorton and his company were gone out of what they called their jurisdiction, they got Pumham and Socononco, two Indian sachems, to come to Boston in June, and to submit themselves and their lands unto their government, and then to enter a complaint against Gorton and his company, that they had taken away their lands, by the influence of Miantanimo, who forced Pumham to sign the deed, as they said, though he would not receive any of the pay for it. Upon which the governor and one assistant wrote to Gorton and his company to come to Boston, and answer to these complaints; and they sent to Miantanimo also to come to Boston for the same end. But Gorton and his company sent a long and provoking letter, and refused to go. Miantanimo went down and justified his sale of those lands, and said those sachems were his subjects, or rulers under him. And it appears by many writings, that he was a man of the greatest powers of mind, and of the greatest influence among the Indians of almost any one in the land, which caused the English to be greatly afraid of him.

After much consultation, commissioners from New Haven, Connecticut, Plymouth, and Massachusetts, met at Boston in September, and signed articles of confederation for mutual assistance and defence; that two commissioners from each colony should meet once a year, or oftener, if necessary, to order the general affairs of all,

while the internal government of each should be as before. And Massachusetts declared that Shawomet was within Plymouth colony, and called upon them to relieve the Indians there, whom they said Gorton's company had oppressed; but rather than attempt it, they gave up all the right they had there to Massachusetts, and the other commissioners assented to it.

Massachusetts then put their government into a posture of war, and sent three officers and forty armed soldiers to Shawomet, and brought Gorton and a number of his company to Boston by force. They also brought away about eighty head of their cattle, to pay the cost of this expedition. And when they had got these men there, they left the affair about lands, and tried them for their lives upon a charge of heresy and blasphemy; but a small majority saved their lives for that time; and they enacted that Samuel Gorton, John Weeks, Randal Holden, Robert Potter, Richard Carder, Francis Weston, and John Warner, should be confined in seven of their chief towns, during the pleasure of the court, to work for their living, and not to publish their errors nor to speak against the government, each upon pain of death. Some others had smaller punishments.

In the mean time war had broken out between the Narragansets and the Mohegans, in which Uncas prevailed, and took Miantanimo prisoner, and carried him to Hartford, and left him in the hands of the English, at his own request; and when the commissioners met at Boston in September, they debated about what they should do with him; and though they could not see any right they had to put him to death, yet they feared that if he was set at liberty it would be very dangerous to themselves, and therefore they delivered him to Uncas, for him to execute him without torture, which he did.* Thus one evil leads on to others, like the breaking forth of waters.

For the confinement of Gorton and his company did no good to them, and it caused uneasiness to many of their own people; and therefore when the general court met

* Winthrop, p. 262. 295. 303. 305, 306.

at Boston, March 7, 1644, they passed an act, which said, "It is ordered that Samuel Gorton and the rest of that company, who stand confined, shall be set at liberty; provided that if they or any of them shall, after fourteen days after such enlargement, come within any part of our jurisdiction, either in Massachusetts, or in or near Providence, or any of the lands of Pumham and Soconongo, or elsewhere within our jurisdiction, then such person or persons shall be apprehended, wheresoever they may be taken, and shall suffer death by course of law; provided also, that during all their continuance in our bounds inhabiting for the said time of fourteen days, they shall be still bound to the rest of the articles of their former confinement, upon the penalty therein expressed."

Thus it stands upon their records. And one of the officers who brought them to Boston, says, "To be sure there be them in New England, that have Christ Jesus and his blessed ordinances in such esteem, that, the Lord assisting, they had rather lose their lives than suffer them to be thus blasphemed, if they can help it. And whereas some have favoured them, and endeavoured to bring under blame such as have been zealous against their abominable doctrines; the good God be favourable unto them, and prevent them from coming under the like blame with Ahab. Yet they remained in their old way; and there is somewhat to be considered in it, to be sure, that in these days, when all look for the fall of antichrist, such detestable doctrines should be upheld, and persons suffered, who exceed the beast himself for blasphemy; and this to be done by those that would be counted reformers, and such as seek the utter subversion of antichrist."*

This history was finished in 1652; and it discovers the sincerity of the actors in those measures, which now appear very strange. And if any men had a right to use force with others about religious affairs, perhaps these were as pious men as ever did so, as I observed before. But nothing serves more to prejudice sinful men against the truth, than injurious treatment from those who teach

* Johnson's History, p. 187.

it; which Gorton and his company have evidenced even to this day. For when they were released, they went to Rhode Island, and from thence over to the Narragansets, where they procured a deed from the Indians of all their people and lands, which they resigned over to the King of England, and appointed Gorton and others as their agents to carry the same to him, dated April 19, 1644. And they went over to England with it, and there published an account of their sufferings at Boston; and though the king could not help them, yet they obtained an order from the Parliament to Massachusetts, to allow them to enjoy the lands which they had purchased, and to remove any obstructions that they had put in the way of it. And as the Earl of Warwick was their great friend in this affair, they called their town Warwick. And Gorton taught his doctrines there for many years; and the effects of them, and of the persecutions which these men suffered, with the general nature of sin, have caused a large part of their posterity to neglect all religion to this day; others of them have become professors of religion, but not in the Congregational way.

When Mr. Williams saw how things went here, and that some light opened in England, he went there in the spring of 1643, and published a key to the language and customs of the Indians in our country; which the Historical Society at Boston reprinted in 1794. And as Sir Henry Vane, who was Governor at Boston in the time of the Pequot war, was now a member of Parliament, and had a great regard for Mr. Williams: he used his great influence in procuring a charter for him, "Bordering northward and north-east on the patent of Massachusetts, east and south-east on Plymouth patent, south on the ocean, and on the west and north-west by the Indians called Narragansets; the whole tract extending about twenty-five miles unto the Pequot river and country; to be known by the name of 'the incorporation of Providence plantations in the Narraganset bay, in New England.'" It gave them power to form their own government, elect all their officers, and to make all their laws, as near the laws of England as they could. This charter

was dated March 14, 1644, and was signed by Robert Warwick, Philip Pembroke, Say and Seal, Philip Wharton, Arthur Haslerig, Cornelius Holland, Henry Vane, Samuel Vassel, John Rolle, Miles Corbet, and William Spurstow.

With this they sent a letter to the rulers and other friends in Massachusetts, saying, "Taking notice, some of us of long time, of Mr. Roger Williams, his good affections and conscience, and of his sufferings by our common enemies and oppressors of God's people—the prelates; as also of his great industry and travel in his printed Indian labours in your parts, the like whereof we have not seen extant from any part of America, and in which respect it hath pleased both houses of Parliament freely to grant unto him and friends with him a free and absolute charter of civil government for these parts of his abode; and withal sorrowfully resenting, that amongst good men, our friends, driven to the ends of the earth, exercised with the trials of a wilderness, and who mutually give good testimony each of other, as we observe you do of him, and he abundantly of you; there should be such a distance. We thought it fit upon divers considerations, to profess our great desires of both your utmost endeavours of nearer closing, and of ready expressing of these good affections, which we perceive you bear each to other, in the actual performance of all friendly offices; the rather because of those bad neighbours you are like to find too near you in Virginia, and the unfriendly visits from the west of England and from Ireland;* that howsoever it may please the Most High to shake our foundations, yet the report of your peaceable and prosperous plantations may be some refreshing to your true and faithful friends."†

Mr. Williams arrived at Boston with this letter, in September, 1644, and they let him pass on to Providence; but they never took off his sentence of banishment, nor

* Places that were then in the king's party, but were soon after brought under the parliament.

† Winthrop, p. 356.

ever allowed of the validity of the charter of his own civil government until 1656. And we are now to see the cause of it more fully. For Mr. Williams published a book in London that year, which opened the evil of their conduct, beyond any thing he had done before. The title of it is, "The bloody tenet of persecution for the cause of conscience." It appeared to Mr. Cotton to be of so dangerous tendency to them, that he published an answer to it in 1647, which he called, "The bloody tenet washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb." But Williams replied to it in 1652, and called it, "The bloody tenet yet more bloody, by Mr. Cotton's endeavour to wash it white." And I will give a few extracts from these writings.

A prisoner in London wrote some reasons against persecution, which one Hall of Roxbury obtained, and sent it to Mr. Cotton, and he wrote an answer to it. But as Mr. Hall was not satisfied therewith, he sent it to Mr. Williams, who now published the whole controversy. The prisoner first brought the case which Christ has stated, of the children of his kingdom, and the children of the devil, appearing by their fruits in the field of the world, when he said, "Let both grow together until the harvest." Matt. xiii. 30. 38. And the prisoner said, "the reason seems to be, because they who are *tares*, may hereafter become *wheat;* they who are blind, may hereafter see; they who resist him, may hereafter receive him; they who are now in the devil's snare, and averse to the truth, may hereafter come to repentance; they who are now blasphemers and persecutors, as Paul was, may in time become faithful, as he did; they who are now idolaters, as the Corinthians once were, may hereafter become true worshippers, as they did; (1 Cor. vi. 9;) they who are *no people* of God, nor under *mercy*, may hereafter become his people, and obtain mercy. 1 Peter ii. 10.*

Now, though these things are very plain, yet Mr. Cotton went on for more than forty pages, before he came to the case in hand, which the prisoner said in few words, "Tares are antichristians or false Christians."† And

* Bloody tenet, p. 2. † Ibid. p. 44.

when Mr. Cotton came to this he said, "It is not the will of Christ that antichrist and antichristianity should be tolerated in the world, until the end of the world. For God will put it into the hearts of faithful princes (as they have given their kingdoms to the beast, so) in fulness of time to hate the whore, to leave her desolate and naked, and to burn her flesh with fire. Rev. xvii. 16, 17."* Mr. Williams had before said, "This hating, and desolating, and making naked, and burning, shall not arise by way of *ordinance*, warranted by the institution of Christ Jesus; but by way of *providence*, when (as it useth to be with whores and their lovers) the church of Rome and her great lovers shall fall out; and, by the righteous vengeance of God upon her, drunk with the blood of the saints, these mighty fornicators shall turn their love into hatred, which shall make her a poor naked whore, torn and consumed."† But Mr. Cotton passed this over in silence.

Now if we take the word flesh here to mean riches, it is well known that the King of France did the most to enrich the pope, of any king upon earth; and the French nation have now taken the riches of the church of Rome to support war and vengeance against her, above all others in the world. And is not this according to that prophecy?

Of civil government, Mr. Williams says, "The sovereign, original, and foundation of civil power lies in the people; and it is evident that such governments as are by them erected and established, have no more power, nor for no longer time, than the civil power or people consenting and agreeing shall betrust them with. This is clear, not only in reason, but in the experience of all commonweals, where the people are not deprived of their *natural freedom* by the power of tyrants."‡ Yea, the experience of all America, in her deliverance from the tyranny of Britain, confirms this truth. And as to religion, Mr. Williams says, "Persons may with less sin be forced

* Tenet washed, p. 42, 43. † Bloody tenet, p. 246.
‡ Bloody tenet, p. 137.

to marry whom they cannot love, than to worship where they cannot believe.* And I find no answer to this.

Mr. Cotton was so far from thinking that he was a persecutor, that he said, "It is not lawful to prosecute any, until after admonition once or twice; and so the apostle directeth, and giveth the reason, that in fundamental points of doctrine or worship, the word of God is so clear, that he cannot but be convinced in conscience of the dangerous error of his way, after admonition once or twice, wisely and faithfully dispensed. And then if any one persist, it is not out of conscience, but *against his conscience*, as the apostle saith. Titus iii. 10, 11." Upon which Williams says, "Titus, unto whom these directions were written, was no minister of the civil state, armed with the material sword, who might inflict punishments upon the bodies of men, by imprisonments, whipping, fines, banishment, and death. Titus was a minister of the gospel, armed only with the spiritual sword of the word of God, and such spiritual weapons as were mighty through God to the casting down strongholds; yea, every high thought of the highest head and heart in the world. 1 Cor. x. 4."† And he observes that the charges and exhortations which Christ gave to his ministers, are now applied to civil magistrates in this affair. But upon this Mr. Cotton says,

"Look the answer through, and you shall find not one of the charges or exhortations given to ministers, ever directed by the answerer to civil magistrates: the falsehood of the discusser in this charge upon the answer is palpable and notorious." And yet in this book he says, "the good that is brought to princes and subjects by the due punishment of apostate seducers, idolaters, and blasphemers, is manifold. 1. It putteth away evil from the people, and cutteth off a gangrene, which would spread to further ungodliness. Deut. xiii. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 16—18. 2. It driveth away wolves from worrying and scattering the sheep of Christ; for false teachers be wolves. Matt. vi. 15. Acts xx. 29. And the very name of wolves holdeth

* Bloody tenet, p. 143. † Ibid. p. 36.

forth what benefit will redound to the sheep, by either killing them, or driving them away."*

If any man will take the pains to examine Mr. Cotton's book well, he will find that his main arguments are taken from Scriptures which belong to the church, and not to the state. And that passage in the epistle to Titus, about a heretic condemned of himself, is referred to from one end of his book to the other. And it is implied in the sentence of banishment passed against Mr. Williams, where he is condemned for writing letters against their rulers "before any conviction." This idea the court evidently took from Mr. Cotton, and had great influence in their government. And as Williams denied that Christ had appointed the civil sword as a remedy against false teachers, Cotton said, "it is evident that the civil sword was appointed for a remedy in this case. Deut. xiii. And appointed it was by that angel of God's presence, whom God promised to send with his people, as being unwilling to go with them himself. Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3. And that angel was Christ, whom they tempted in the wilderness. 1 Cor. x. 9. And therefore it cannot truly be said, that the Lord Jesus never appointed the civil sword for a remedy in such case; for he did expressly appoint it in the Old Testament; nor did he ever abrogate it in the New. The reason of the law, which is the life of the law, is of eternal force and equity in all ages: Thou shalt surely kill him, because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, Deut. xiii. 9, 10. This reason is of moral: that is, of universal and perpetual equity, to put to death any apostate seducing idolater or heretic, who seeketh to thrust away the souls of God's people from the Lord their God."†

From hence Williams called his reply, "The bloody tenet yet more bloody by Mr. Cotton's endeavour to wash it white;" from which many extracts are made in the first volume of our history; and also an extract from Dr. Owen, who said, "He who holds the truth may be confuted, but he cannot be convinced but by the truth. That

* Tenet washed, p. 88. 137, 138. † Ibid. p. 66, 67.

a man should be said to be convinced of a truth, and yet that truth not shine in upon his understanding, to the expelling the contrary error, to me is strange. To be convinced is to be overpowered by the evidence of that which before a man knew not. I once knew a scholar invited to a dispute with another man about something in controversy in religion; in his own, and in the judgment of all the bystanders, the opposing person was utterly confuted: and yet the scholar, within a few months, was taught of God, and clearly convinced that it was an error which he had maintained, and the truth which he opposed; and then, and not till then, did he cease to wonder that the other was not convinced by his strong arguments as he before had thought. To say a man is convinced, when either from want of skill and ability, or the like, he cannot maintain his opinion against all men, is a mere conceit. That they are obstinate and pertinacious is a cheap supposal taken up without the price of a proof. As the conviction is imposed—not owned, so is this obstinacy: if we may be judges of other men's obstinacy, all will be plain; but if ever they get uppermost, they will be judges of ours."* This the great Dr. Owen published in London the year after Mr. Cotton's book came out there. But it was so little regarded here, that violent methods were still pursed in this country, though against the minds of many.

When the commissioners of the united colonies met at New Haven, September 9, 1646, they said, "Upon serious consideration of the spreading nature of error, the dangerous growth and effects thereof in other places, and especially how the purity and power both of religion and civil order is already much complained of, if not wholly lost in part of New England by a licentious liberty granted and settled, whereby many, casting off the rule of the word, profess and practise what is good in their own eyes; and upon information of what petitions have been lately put up in some of the colonies against the good and straight ways of Christ, both in the churches and in the

* Folio collection of his tracts, p. 312.

commonwealth, the commissioners, remembering that these colonies, for themselves and their posterity, did unite into this firm and perpetual league as for other respects, so for mutual advice, that the truth and liberties of the gospel might be preserved and perpetuated, thought it their duty seriously to commend it to the care and consideration of each general court within these united colonies, that as they have laid their foundations and measured the house of God, the worship and worshippers, by the rod God hath put into their hands, so they would walk on and build up (all discouragements and difficulties notwithstanding) with undaunted heart and unwearied hand, according to the same rules and patterns; that a due watch be kept at the doors of God's house, that none be admitted as members of the body of Christ, but such as hold forth effectual calling, and thereby union with Christ the head; and those whom Christ hath received, and enter by an express covenant to observe the laws and duties of that spiritual corporation; that baptism, the seal of the covenant, be administered only to such members and their immediate seed; that Anabaptism, Familism, Antinomianism, and generally all errors of like nature which oppose, undermine, and slight either the Scriptures, the Sabbath, or other ordinances of God, bring in and cry up unwarrantable revelations, inventions of men, or any carnal liberty under a deceitful colour of liberty of conscience, may be duly and seasonably suppressed; though they wish as much forbearance and respect may be had of tender consciences seeking light, as may stand with the purity of religion and peace of the churches."

But the commissioners from Plymouth did not concur with this act. They had not lost the impression of the instructions which they received before they came to America; which said, "As the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but spiritual, and he a spiritual king, so must the government of this spiritual kingdom under this spiritual king needs be spiritual, and all the laws of it. And as Christ Jesus hath, by the merits of his priesthood, redeemed as well the body as the soul;* so is he by the

* John xviii. 36. 1 Cor. vi. 20.

sceptre of his kingdom to rule and reign over both; unto which Christian magistrates, as well as meaner persons, ought to submit themselves; and the more Christian they are, the more meekly to take the yoke of Christ upon them; and the greater authority they have, the more effectually to advance his sceptre over themselves and their people, by all good means. Neither can there be any reason given why the merits of saints may not as well be mingled with the merits of Christ for the saving of the church, as the laws of men with his laws, for the ruling and guiding of it. He is as absolute and as entire a king as he is a priest, and his people must be as careful to preserve the dignity of the one, as to enjoy the benefit of the other."*

CHAPTER IV.

Plan of Williams' government; and of the churches in Massachusetts—Cambridge platform—Williams on national confusion—Coddington does hurt to his own colony—Winthrop dies—Clarke and Holmes suffer at Boston—Williams and Clarke go to England, and expose such doings there—Letter about it from thence—Cotton dies—Infant baptism opposed at Cambridge—Williams and Clarke opposed in England, and yet prevail—Williams returns, and is president here; and prevails in his colony—Quakers come over and behave provokingly, and four of them were hanged.

THE severities that were exercised in the other colonies caused many of different opinions to remove into Providence colony, where they could have full liberty; and this made it more difficult for them to agree upon their plan of government. But on May 19, 1647, they met at Portsmouth, and elected a president, as their chief ruler, and an assistant from each of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth, Newport, and Warwick; and they were to be judges in executive courts, and to keep

* Robinson against Bernard, p. 38.

the peace. But six representatives from each town were to make their laws, which were to be sent to each town, to be established or disannulled by the major vote of all their freemen. Mr. Williams was their assistant for Providence; but such difficulties arose in the colony, that he drew a covenant in December following for all to sign who would, wherein they say, "That government held forth through love, union, and order, though by few in number and mean in condition, yet hath by experience withstood and overcome mighty opposers; and, above all, the several unexpected deliverances of this poor plantation, by that mighty Providence who is still able to deliver us, through love, union, and order; therefore being sensible of these great and weighty premises, and now met together to consult about our peace and liberty, whereby our families and posterity will still enjoy these favours; and that we may declare unto all the free discharge of our conscience and duties, whereby it may appear upon record that we are not wilfully opposite, nor careless and senseless, and so the means of our own and others' ruin and destruction; and especially in testimony of our fidelity and affection unto one another here present, we promise unto each other to keep unto the ensuing particulars." And so went on to lay down excellent rules of conduct, in order to remove their difficulties.

The name Providence, which Mr. Williams gave both to his town and colony, and the word HOPE, in their public seal, with the figure of an ANCHOR therein, were designed to hold forth the HOPE that he had in God, that he would succeed the great work that he was engaged in, of establishing a civil government upon the principles of true freedom to soul and body. This appears plain in many of his writings. But as they now appeared to be weak, and to have divisions among them, Massachusetts still refused to own them as a distinct government, and tried all they could to bring them under their power, which they thought was a holy government; and to continue it so, Governor Winthrop says,

"Two churches were appointed to be gathered, one at Haverhill and the other at Andover, both upon Merri-

mack river. They had given notice thereof to the magistrates and elders, who desired, in regard of their remoteness and scarcity of housing there, that the meeting might be at Rowley, which they assented unto; but being assembled, most of those who were to join refused to declare how God had carried on the work of grace in them, because they had declared it formerly in their admission into other churches; whereupon the assembly broke up without proceeding." This was in the fall of 1644.* Their strictness of government, both in church and state, did much towards restraining of immoralities among them; so much that Mr. Hugh Peters, who came over to Boston in 1635, and travelled and laboured much in this country, until he went back upon the turn of times in England, where he became very famous, gave an extraordinary character of New England. When the Parliament had conquered all the king's forces in England, they kept a day of thanksgiving for it, April 2, 1646, and Peters preached a sermon before the Parliament, the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and the corporation of the city of London, to whom he said, "I have lived in a country, where for seven years I never saw a beggar, nor heard an oath, nor looked upon a drunkard."† This he said to urge them into like measures with Massachusetts.

But a greater sight now appears before the world, than was then so much extolled. For the scheme which they so much admired, has long since been broken and dissolved; and the principles which were then despised and persecuted, are now become the glory of America. Roger Williams, John Clarke, Joseph Clarke, Thomas Olney, Gregory Dexter, Samuel Hubbard, and many others in that little colony, held the pure doctrines of grace, and the importance of a holy life, as much as the fathers of Massachusetts did; and they established the first government upon earth, that gave equal liberty, civil and religious, which is now enjoyed in the most parts of America. General Greene also, the second military character in our revolu-

* Winthrop, p. 356. † Peters' Sermon, p. 44.

tionary war, sprang from one of the first planters of Providence. These things show how great men have been mistaken, and that we ever should judge of things by the light of revelation, and not take any men as our guides, further than they appear to walk in that light.

Many books were brought from England about this time, but none were more disagreeable to the fathers of Massachusetts, than those which were written against infant baptism, and for liberty of conscience. Several extracts from those writings have already been given. And the public records at Boston, 1646, show that controversies about infant baptism were a chief cause of their calling a synod, to compose a platform of government for their churches. Ministers were called from all their colonies to assist in this work. But Mr. Hooker of Hartford died before they met, on July 7, 1647. A book of his was printed in London, after his death, in which he says, "Children, as children, have no right to baptism; so that it belongs not to any predecessors, either nearer or further off, removed from the next parents, to give right of this privilege to their children."* And when the synod met in 1648, and composed their platform, which was approved by their general court, the majority of them agreed with him in this, though Mr. Cotton would have extended it further. And though he, and their churches in general, had allowed no elders to lay on hands in ordination, but the elders of the church in which the pastor was ordained; yet they now said, "In churches where there are no elders, and the church so desire, we see not why imposition of hands may not be performed by the elders of other churches." In this I think they were right; but when they say, "If any church, one or more, shall grow schismatical, rending itself from the communion of other churches, or shall walk incorrigibly or obstinately in any corrupt way of their own, contrary to the rule of the word; in such case the magistrate is to put forth his coercive power, as the matter shall require;† here I must enter my dissent, be-

* Survey of Church Discipline, part iii. p. 13.

† Platform, ch. ix. xvii.

cause this principle is the root of all the bloody persecution that ever was in the world.

Mr. Williams observes, that the attempts for a reformation in England, by the power of the magistrate, filled their country with blood and confusion for a hundred years. For says he, "Henry the Seventh leaves England under the slavish bondage of the pope's yoke. Henry the Eighth reforms all England to a new fashion, half Papist, half Protestant. King Edward the Sixth turns about the wheels of state, and works the whole land to absolute Protestantism. Queen Mary, succeeding to the helm, steers a direct contrary course, breaks in pieces all that Edward wrought, and brings forth an old edition of England's reformation, all Popish. Mary not living out half her days, (as the prophet speaks of bloody persons,) Elizabeth (like Joseph) is advanced from the prison to the palace, and from the irons to the crown; she plucks up all her sister Mary's plants, and sounds a trumpet, all Protestant. What sober man is not amazed at these revolutions!"*

Yet as all these revolutions were made by rulers who were not comparable to the godly magistrates and ministers here, they regarded not the warnings of men whom they thought to be deceived. And a writ was sent from Boston, to cite men in the midst of Providence colony, to come to Boston to answer to complaints that were entered there, dated June 20, 1650; which writ is recorded at Providence. Not only so, but when Mr. Coddington was elected president of his colony, May 16, 1648, he refused to serve, because William Dyer had commenced an action against him about some lands; and in September after he went and tried to get Rhode Island to be received into confederacy with the united colonies; and as that scheme failed, he went to England, in the year 1651, and obtained a commission for himself to be governor of that island, separate from the rest of the colony, when he had the deeds of the whole island in his own hands. This caused such a fire of contention among them, that one

* Bloody tenet, p. 197.

man was condemned by a vote of the town of Newport, and was carried out and shot to death in their presence. How they were relieved will appear hereafter.

Governor Winthrop was an excellent ruler, until he died, March 26, 1649, in his 62d year. He kept a journal of remarkable events in his colony, from 1630, until near his end. Hubbard, Mather, and Prince made great use of it in their histories. But the first volume of it was published entire in 1790, as it never was before. It gives the clearest account of dates, principles, and motives of actions in their government, of any work that ever was published. By it we may learn that he was for milder measures with dissenters from their worship, than the majority of their rulers and ministers were; and though they drew him into greater severities than he desired, yet near his end, when Mr. Dudley desired him to sign an order to banish a person for heterodoxy, he refused, saying, "We have done too much of that work already."* He spent a large part of his great estate in promoting the plantation of his colony, though he met with much ungrateful treatment therein; but his eldest son went over and procured Connecticut charter, and was governor of that colony until he died, in 1676. These were great honours for one family.

Mr. John Clarke was an assistant and the treasurer of Rhode Island colony in 1649; but that could not secure him from cruel persecution in Massachusetts two years after, with Mr. Obadiah Holmes, who sprang from a good family in England. When Holmes came over first to this country, he joined the church in Salem, and was dismissed from thence to the church in Rehoboth, under the ministry of Mr. Samuel Newman. With them he walked about five years, and then he withdrew from Newman, because he had assumed a presbyterial power over the church. Soon after, he and some became Baptists, upon which Newman excommunicated them, and then got them presented to the court of Plymouth, June 4, 1650. And when they came there, they found that

* Belknap's Biography, vol. ii. p. 356.

one letter was sent to the court against them from Rehoboth, another from Taunton, a third from most of the ministers in Plymouth colony, and a fourth from the court at Boston, all urging sharp dealings with them. But Governor Bradford and his court only charged them to desist from their separate meeting at Rehoboth, and adjourned their case to October court, when they were dismissed without any punishment. Such was then the government of Plymouth colony. But how different was that of Massachusetts! There Mr. Clarke and two of his brethren went to visit an old brother of theirs at Lynn, beyond Boston, where they arrived July 19, 1651, and held worship with him the next day, which was the Lord's day. But Mr. Clarke could not get through his first sermon before he and his friends were seized by an officer, and carried to a tavern, and to the parish worship in the afternoon; and at the close of it Clarke spake a few words, and then a magistrate sent them into confinement, and next day to Boston prison. And on July 31, they were tried before the court of assistants, by whom Clarke was fined twenty pounds, Holmes thirty, and John Crandal five, or each to be well whipped. When Judge Endicot gave this sentence against them, he said, "You go up and down, and secretly insinuate things into those that are weak, but you cannot maintain it before our ministers; you may try and dispute with them." Therefore Mr. Clarke wrote from the prison to the court, and proposed a fair dispute upon his principles with any of their ministers. And upon asking what said principles were, he said,

"I testify that Jesus of Nazareth, whom God hath raised from the dead, is made Lord and Christ; this Jesus I say is Christ; in English, the anointed one; hath a name above every name; he is the anointed Priest, none to or with him in point of atonement; the anointed Prophet, none to him in point of institution; the anointed King, who is gone unto his Father for his glorious kingdom, and shall, ere long, return again; and that this Jesus Christ is also Lord, none to or with him by way of commanding and ordering, with reference to the worship

of God, the household of faith, which being purchased with his blood as a priest, instructed and nourished by his Spirit as a prophet, do wait in his appointments, as he is the Lord, in hope of that glorious kingdom, which shall ere long appear. 2. I testify that baptism, or dipping in water, is one of the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that a visible believer, or disciple of Christ Jesus (that is, one who manifesteth repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ) is the only person to be baptized or dipped with water, and also that visible person that is to walk in that visible order of his house, and to wait for his coming the second time in the form of Lord and King, with his glorious kingdom, according to promise; and for his sending down, in the time of his absence, the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit of promise, and all this according to the last will and testament of that living Lord, whose will is not to be added to or taken from. 3. I testify or witness, that every such believer in Christ Jesus, that waiteth for his appearing, may, in point of liberty, yea, ought, in point of duty, to improve that talent his Lord hath given him, and in the congregation may ask for information to himself; or if he can, may speak by way of prophecy for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the whole; and out of the congregation at all times, upon all occasions, and in all places, as far as the jurisdiction of his Lord extendeth, may, yea, ought to walk as a child of light, justifying wisdom with his ways, and reproving folly with the unfruitful works thereof; provided all this is shown out of a good conversation, as James speaks, with meekness of wisdom. 4. I testify, that no such believer, or servant of Christ Jesus, hath any liberty, much less authority, from his Lord, to smite his fellow-servant, nor with outward force, or arm of flesh to constrain, or restrain his conscience, nor his outward man for conscience sake, or worship of his God, where injury is not offered to any person, name, or estate of others, every man being such as shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and must give an account of himself to God; and, therefore, ought to be fully persuaded in his own mind for what he

undertakes, because he that doubteth is damned if he eat, and so also if he act, because he doth not eat or act in faith, and what is not of faith is sin."*

When he had given this plain testimony, there was a talk that Mr. Cotton would dispute him upon it; but after consulting together, Cotton declined, and Clarke was released from prison, to be gone out of the colony as soon as possible. Crandal also was released with him; but as Holmes had been one of them, they resolved to make him a public example. He was therefore confined until September, and then was brought out to be punished in Boston; and two magistrates, Nowel and Flint, were present to see it done severely. Mr. Holmes, after giving the previous exercises of his own mind, says,

"I desired to speak a few words: but Mr. Nowel answered, It is not now a time to speak; whereupon I took leave, and said, Men, brethren, fathers and countrymen, I beseech you to give me leave to speak a few words, and the rather because here are many spectators to see me punished, and I am to seal with my blood, if God give strength, that which I hold and practise in reference to the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus. That which I have to say in brief is this, although I am no disputant, yet seeing I am to seal with my blood what I hold, I am ready to defend by the word, and to dispute that point with any that shall come forth to withstand it. Mr. Nowel answered, now was no time to dispute; then said I, I desire to give an account of the faith and order which I hold, and this I desired three times; but in comes Mr. Flint, and saith to the executioner, Fellow, do thine office, for this fellow would but make a long speech to delude the people; so I, being resolved to speak, told the people, that which I am to suffer for is the word of God, and testimony of Jesus Christ. No, saith Mr. Nowel, it is for your error, and going about to seduce the people; to which I replied, Not for error, for in all the time of my imprisonment, wherein I was left alone, my brethren being gone, which of all your ministers came to

* Clarke's Narrative, p. 9, 10.

convince me of error? And when, upon the governor's words, a motion was made for a public dispute, and often renewed upon fair terms, and desired by hundreds, what was the reason it was not granted? Mr. Nowel told me, it was his fault who went away and would not dispute; but this the writings will clear at large. Still Mr. Flint calls to the man to do his office; so before, and in the time of his pulling off my clothes, I continued speaking, telling them that I had so learned that for all Boston I would not give my body into their hands thus to be bruised upon another account, yet upon this I would not give the hundredth part of a wampum peague* to free it out of their hands; and that I made as much conscience of unbuttoning one button, as I did of paying the thirty pounds in reference thereunto. I told them moreover, that the Lord having manifested his love towards me, in giving me repentance towards God, and faith in Christ, and so to be baptized in water by a messenger of Jesus, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, wherein I have fellowship with him in his death, burial, and resurrection, I am now come to be baptized in afflictions by your hands, that so I may have further fellowship with my Lord, and am not ashamed of his sufferings, for by his stripes am I healed. And as the man began to lay the strokes upon my back, I said to the people, though my flesh should fail, and my spirit should fail, yet God would not fail; so it pleased the Lord to come in, and to fill my heart and tongue as a vessel full, and with an audible voice I break forth, praying the Lord not to lay this sin to their charge, and telling the people that now I found he did not fail me, and therefore now I should trust him forever who failed me not; for in truth, as the strokes fell upon me, I had such a spiritual manifestation of God's presence, as I never had before, and the outward pain was so removed from me, that I could well bear it, yea, and in a manner felt it not, although it was grievous, as the spectators said, the man striking with all his strength, spitting in his hand three times,

* The sixth part of a penny.

with a three corded whip, giving me therewith thirty strokes. When he had loosed me from the post, having joyfulness in my heart, and cheerfulness in my countenance, as the spectators observed, I told the magistrates, You have struck me as with roses; and said, moreover, although the Lord hath made it easy to me, yet I pray God it may not be laid to your charge.

"After this many came to me, rejoicing to see the power of the Lord manifested in weak flesh; but sinful flesh takes occasion hereby to bring others into trouble, informs the magistrates hereof, and so two more are apprehended as for contempt of authority; their names are John Hazel and John Spur, who came indeed and did shake me by the hand, but did use no words of contempt or reproach unto any. No man can prove that the first spake any thing; and for the second, he only said, Blessed be the Lord; yet these two, for taking me by the hand, and thus saying, after I had received my punishment, were sentenced to pay forty shillings, or to be whipt. Both were resolved against paying their fine: nevertheless, after one or two days' imprisonment, one paid John Spur's fine, and he was released; and after six or seven days' imprisonment of brother Hazel, even the day when he should have suffered, another paid his, and so he escaped, and the next day went to visit a friend about six miles from Boston, where he fell sick the same day, and within ten days he ended this life. When I was come to the prison, it pleased God to stir up the heart of an old acquaintance of mine, who with much tenderness, like the good Samaritan, poured oil into my wounds, and plastered my sores; but there was present information given of what was done, and inquiry made who was the surgeon, and it was commonly reported he should be sent for; but what was done, I yet know not. Now thus it hath pleased the Father of mercies to dispose of the matter, that my bonds and imprisonment have been no hinderance to the gospel; for before my return, some submitted to the Lord, and were baptized, and divers were put upon the way of inquiry; and now being advised to make my escape by night, because it was re-

ported that there were warrants forth for me, I departed; and the next day after, while I was on my journey, the constable came to search at the house where I lodged; so I escaped their hands, and by the good hand of my heavenly Father brought home again to my near relations, my wife and eight children, the brethren of our town and Providence having taken pains to meet me four miles in the woods, where we rejoiced together in the Lord. Thus have I given you, as briefly as I can, a true relation of things; wherefore, my brethren, rejoice with me in the Lord, and give all glory to him, for he is worthy, to whom be praise forevermore, to whom I commit you, and put up my earnest prayers for you, that by my late experience, who trusted in God, and have not been deceived, you may trust in him perfectly: wherefore, my dearly beloved brethren, trust in the Lord, and you shall not be ashamed nor confounded. So I rest, yours in the bond of charity, OBADIAH HOLMES.*

"Unto the well beloved John Spilsbury, William Kiffen, and the rest that in London stand fast in the faith."

This was carried to England, and published there in 1652; upon which Sir Richard Saltonstall, who was an early magistrate in Massachusetts, when Boston was first planted, but was now in London, wrote to the ministers of Boston, and said:

"*Reverend and dear friends, whom I unfeignedly love and respect,*

"It doth not a little grieve my spirit to hear what sad things are reported daily of your tyranny and persecution in New England; that you fine, whip, and imprison men for their consciences. First, you compel such to come into your assemblies as you know will not join with you in worship, and when they show their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you stir up your magistrates to punish them for such (as you conceive) their public affronts. Truly, friends, this practice of compelling any in matters of worship to do that whereof they are not fully persuaded, is to make them sin, for so the

* Clarke, p. 17—23.

apostle tells us, Rom. xiv. 23; and many are made hypocrites thereby, conforming in their outward man for fear of punishment. We pray for you, and wish your prosperity every way; hoped the Lord would have given you so much light and love there, that you might have been eyes to God's people here, and not to practise those courses in a wilderness, which you went so far to prevent. These rigid ways have laid you very low in the hearts of the saints. I do assure you I have heard them pray in public assemblies, that the Lord would give you meek and humble spirits, not to strive so much for uniformity as to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. When I was in Holland, about the beginning of our wars, I remember some Christians there, that then had serious thoughts of planting in New England, desired me to write to the governor thereof to know if those that differ from you in opinion, yet holding the same foundation in religion, as Anabaptists, Seekers, Antinomians, and the like, might be permitted to live among you; to which I received this short answer from your then governor, Mr. Dudley: God forbid, said he, our love for the truth should be grown so cold that we should tolerate errors."

To this Mr. Cotton answered, and said:

"*Honoured and dear Sir*,

"My brother Wilson and self do both of us acknowledge your love, as otherwise formerly, so now in the late lines we received from you, that you grieve in spirit to hear daily complaints against us; it springeth from your compassion for our afflictions therein, wherein we see just cause to desire you may never suffer like injury in yourself, but may find others to compassionate and condole with you. For when the complaints you hear of are against our tyranny and persecution in fining, whipping, and imprisoning men for their consciences, be pleased to understand we look at such complaints as altogether injurious in respect of ourselves, who had no hand or tongue at all to promote either the coming of the persons you aim at into our assemblies, or their punishment for their car-

riage there. Righteous judgment will not take up reports, much less reproaches against the innocent. The cry of the sins of Sodom was great and loud, and reached unto heaven; yet the righteous God (giving us an example what to do in the like case) he would first go down to see whether their crimes were altogether according to the cry, before he would proceed to judgment. Gen. xviii. 20, 21. And when he did find the truth of the cry, he did not wrap up all alike promiscuously in the judgment, but spared such as he found innocent. We are amongst those (if you knew us better) you would account of (as the matron of Abel spake of herself) peaceable in Israel. 2 Sam. xx. 19. Yet neither are we so vast in our indulgence or toleration as to think the men you speak of suffered an unjust censure. For one of them—Obadiah Holmes, being an excommunicate person himself, out of a church in Plymouth patent, came into this jurisdiction, and took upon him to baptize, which I think himself will not say he was compelled here to perform. And he was not ignorant that the rebaptizing of an elder person, and that by a private person out of office and under excommunication, are all of them manifest contestations against the order and government of our churches, established, we know, by God's law, and he knoweth by the laws of the country. And we conceive we may safely appeal to the ingenuity of your own judgment, whether it would be tolerated in any civil state, for a stranger to come and practise contrary to the known principles of the church estate? As for his whipping, it was more voluntarily chosen by him than inflicted on him. His censure by the court was to have paid, as I know, thirty pounds, or else to be whipt; his fine was offered to be paid by friends for him freely; but he chose rather to be whipt; in which case, if his sufferings of stripes was any worship of God at all, surely it could be accounted no better than will-worship. The other, Mr. Clarke, was wiser in that point, and his offence was less, so was his fine less, and himself, as I hear, was contented to have it paid for him, whereupon he was released. The imprisonment of either of them was no detriment. I believe they fared neither

of them better at home; and I am sure Holmes had not been so well clad of many years before.

"But be pleased to consider this point a little further. You think to compel men in matter of worship is to make them sin, according to Romans xiv. 23. If the worship be lawful in itself, the magistrate compelling to come to it, compelleth him not to sin, but the sin is in his will that needs to be compelled to a Christian duty. Josiah compelled all Israel, or, which is all one, made to serve the Lord their God. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33. Yet his act herein was not blamed, but recorded among his virtuous actions. For a governor to suffer any within his gates to profane the Sabbath, is a sin against the fourth commandment, both in the private householder and in the magistrate; and if he requires them to present themselves before the Lord, the magistrate sinneth not, nor doth the subject sin so great a sin as if he did refrain to come.—But you say it doth but make men hypocrites, to compel men to conform the outward man for fear of punishment. If it did so, yet better be hypocrites than profane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his due, the outward man, but the profane person giveth God neither outward nor inward man.—Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, we have tolerated in our church some Anabaptists, some Antinomians, and some Seekers, and do so still at this day."*

These letters give a plain idea of the sentiments of these two great men in that day, and that of Mr. Cotton shows the absurdities of his scheme of compulsion about religion. The paying of Mr. Clarke's fine, he says, was done "contrary to my judgment."† Yet Mr. Cotton reports that he consented to it, and reflects upon Holmes for not doing the same. But I have a writing of Governor Jenks, wherein he says, "Although the paying of a fine seems to be a small thing in comparison of a man's parting with his religion: yet the paying of a fine is the acknowledging of a transgression; and for a man to acknowledge that he has transgressed, when his conscience tells him he has not, is but little if any thing short of

* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 401. 407. † Narrative, p. 11.

parting with his religion; and it is likely this might be the consideration of those sufferers." And though Cotton says, "Hypocrites give God part of his due," yet in the first Christian church God struck two hypocrites dead for lying to the Holy Ghost, and said upon it, Of the rest durst no man join himself to them, but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Acts v. 5—14. And how loud is this warning to all the world against lying and hypocrisy, especially in the affairs of religion! And though Mr. Cotton was exceeding confident that their churches were established by the laws of God, yet the character which he gives of his own church is more like confusion of all sentiments, than the union described in the first Christian churches.

Mr. Cotton died on December 23, 1652, soon after this letter was written. He was greatly esteemed, both in Europe and America, as a clear preacher of the gospel. And though he was so dark about Christian liberty, yet Mr. Williams says, "Since it pleased God to lay a command on my conscience to come in as his poor witness in this great cause, I rejoice that it hath pleased him to appoint so able, and excellent, and conscionable an instrument, to bolt out the truth to the brain. As it is my constant grief to differ from any fearing God, so much more from Mr. Cotton, whom I highly esteem and dearly respect, for so great a portion of mercy given unto him, and so many truths of Christ maintained by him."* So that his conscience obliged him to write against the errors of a man whom he highly esteemed. And in the same book he sent a letter to Governor Endicot, in which he said, "By your principles and conscience, such as you count heretics, blasphemers, and seducers must be put to death. You cannot be faithful to your principles and conscience without it."† Endicot did plead conscience in putting four persons to death about eight years after; and this hath exposed New England to reproach among the nations ever since, more than any other action they ever did.

* Preface to Williams against Cotton, 1652, p. 6.

† Tenet more bloody, p. 312.

The sufferings and writings of the Baptists at this time were a cause of light to many. Mr. Henry Dunstar, president of Cambridge college, had such a turn in his mind, that he boldly preached in their pulpit, that they had no right to baptize any infant whatever. And when Mr. Mitchel, minister in the town, went to talk with him upon the subject, great scruples were raised in his own mind about infant baptism. But he laboured hard to remove them, and at length concluded that they were from the devil, and said, "I resolved that I would have an argument able to remove a mountain, before I would recede from, or appear against a truth or practice received among the faithful."* This was in December, 1653; and Dr. Cotton Mather published it to the world in 1697, and Mr. John Cleveland of Ipswich inserted it in a piece he published for infant baptism in 1784. Thus it has been a tradition in New England, from the fathers of Massachusetts to our days, that they who forsake infant baptism are deceived by the devil, though that practice is not named in the Bible! And Mr. Dunstar was turned out from being president, for rejecting it; and such a temper was discovered against him, that he removed out of their colony, and spent the remainder of his days at Scituate in Plymouth colony, where he died in 1659. Captain Johnson finished writing his history in 1652, just before this event, and then he said, "Mr. Henry Dunstar is now president of the college, fitted from the Lord for the work, and by those that have skill that way, reported to be an able proficient, both in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, an orthodox preacher of the truths of Christ, and very powerful, through his blessing, to move the affections."†

At the same time he said, "Familists, Seekers, Antinomians, and Anabaptists are so ill armed, that they think it best sleeping in a whole skin; fearing that if the day of battle once goes on, they shall fall among antichrist's armies; and therefore cry out like cowards, If you will

* Mitchel's Life, p. 67—70.

† Johnson, p. 168. His history was printed in 1654.

let me alone, I will let you alone; but assuredly the Lord Christ hath said, He that is not with us is against us: there is no room in his army for toleratorists."* But the Baptists were so far from fear or discouragement, that they boldly persevered in their way, till they obtained deliverance. The towns of Newport and Portsmouth chose Mr. Clarke, and Providence and Warwick chose Mr. Williams their agents to go to England, and plead their cause there. And that they might have a fair trial, the commissioners of the United Colonies, at their meeting in September, 1651, received a writing from Warwick, saying, "May it please this honoured committee to take knowledge, that we, the inhabitants of Shawomet, alias Warwick, having undergone divers oppressions and wrongs, amounting to great damage, since we first possessed this place; being forced thereby to seek to the honourable state of Old England for relief, which did inevitably draw great charge upon us, to the further impairing of our estates; and finding favour for redress, were willing to waive for that time (in regard to the great troubles and employment that then lay on that state) all other lesser wrongs we then underwent, so that we might be replaced in and upon this our purchased possession, and enjoy it peaceably for time to come, without disturbance or molestation by those from whom we had formerly suffered. But since our gracious grant from the Hon. Parliament, in replacing of us in this place, we have been and are daily pressed with intolerable grievances, to the eating up of our labours, and wasting of our estates, making our lives, together with our wives and children, bitter and uncomfortable; insomuch that, groaning under our burden, we are again constrained to make our address to the Parliament." And so gave the colonies notice to be prepared to answer their complaints there.

This caused the commissioners of Massachusetts, Bradstreet and Hathorne, to observe that Plymouth gave up those lands to them in 1643, to which others assented, and told of the great pains and expense they had been at

* Johnson, p. 231.

about Gorton and his company, and support to the Indians, who said those men had wronged them about their lands; and desired to know if the other colonies would help them to do justice for the Indians. But the commissioners from Plymouth, Brown and Hatherly, declared that what was done in 1643, by men from their colony, was going beyond their authority, who had no right over Shawomet lands, and that Massachusetts had no right to do all that they had in the heart of Providence colony. And the commissioners from Connecticut and New Haven owned that it might be so. This is all plain in their records. And Williams and Clarke sailed from Boston with these complaints in November, though Williams had hard work to get a passage from thence, notwithstanding the services he had done for them formerly.

When they arrived at London, each of them published the books which I have before named: and in October they obtained a vacation of Coddington's commission, and an order for their colony to unite again, under their former charter. This was brought over by William Dyer, who left it on Rhode Island, and wrote to Providence and Warwick to come there and act upon it. But as these two towns had acted upon their charter all the while that the island was in confusion, they still remained two parties; and there were many against them in England. Edward Winslow, who had been governor of Plymouth, and Edward Hopkins, who had been governor of Connecticut, were then in England.

On April 1, 1653, Mr. Williams wrote to his constituents, and said, "The determination of our controversy is hindered by two main obstructions. The first is the mighty war with the Dutch. Our second obstruction is the opposition of our adversaries, Sir Arthur Haselrig and Colonel Fenwick, who married his daughter, Mr. Winslow, and Mr. Hopkins, both in great place; and all the friends they can make in the Parliament and council, and all the priests, both Presbyterian and Independent; so that we stand as two armies ready to engage, observing the motions and postures each of other, and yet shy each of other." But before that month was out, Cromwell

dissolved the Parliament, which altered things greatly; and the Presbyterians have never had so great power in England since, as they had before.

Mr. Williams continued there another year, and then left Mr. Clarke, their agent, in England, while he came over to settle affairs here. And he brought a letter from Sir Henry Vane, which contained sharp reproofs for their disorders in his colony, and wise advice about removing of them. But Williams found it very hard work to get the two parties together, and yet he did it; and they met on September 12, 1654, and elected him for their president, and then voted to have him send letters of thanks to their benefactors in England. On May 22, 1655, he was again elected president for a year. But some men had been so troublesome among them, that a letter was procured from the protector in England, which said,

"*Gentlemen*,

"Your agent here hath represented unto us some particulars concerning your government, which you judge necessary to be settled by us here; but by reason of other great and weighty affairs of this commonwealth, we have been necessitated to defer the consideration of them to a further opportunity; in the mean time we are willing to let you know, that you were to proceed in your government according to the tenor of your charter, formerly granted on that behalf, taking care of the peace and safety of those plantations, that neither through intestine commotions or foreign invasions, there do arise any detriment or dishonour to this commonwealth or yourselves, as far as you by your care and diligence can prevent. And as for the things that are before us, they shall, as soon as other occasions will permit, receive a just and sufficient determination. And so we bid you farewell, and rest, your loving friend, OLIVER P.

"March 29, 1655.

To our trusty and well-beloved, the president, assistants, and inhabitants of Rhode Island, together with the rest of the Providence Plantations in the Narraganset Bay in New England."

Upon receiving this, their assembly met, June 28, and enacted, "That if any person or persons be found by examination and judgment of a general court of commissioners, to be a ringleader or ringleaders of factions or divisions among us, he or they shall be sent over at his or their own charges, as prisoners, to receive his or their trial or sentence, at the pleasure of his highness and the lords of his council." And then all open opposition ceased in their government. And President Williams wrote in November to Massachusetts about their opposition to it; but receiving no satisfaction, he wrote again in May, 1656, and said,

"Honoured sirs, our first request is for your favourable consideration of the long and lamentable condition of the town of Warwick, which hath been thus. They are so dangerously and so vexatiously intermingled with the barbarians, that I have long admired the wonderful power of God in restraining and preventing very great fires of mutual slaughters breaking forth between them. Your wisdoms know the inhumane insultations of these wild creatures, and you may be pleased also to imagine, that they have not been sparing of your name as the patron of all their wickedness against our Englishmen, women, and children, and cattle, to the yearly damage of sixty, eighty, and an hundred pounds. The remedy, under God, is only your pleasure that Pumham shall come to an agreement with the town or colony, and that some convenient way and time be set for their removal. And that your wisdoms may see just grounds for such your willingness, be pleased to be informed of a reality of a solemn covenant between this town of Warwick and Pumham, unto which, notwithstanding he pleads his being drawn to it by the awe of his superior sachems, yet I humbly offer, that what was done was according to the law and tenor of the natives (I take it) in all New England and America, viz. that the inferior sachems and subjects shall plant and remove at the pleasure of the highest and supreme sachems; and I humbly conceive that it pleaseth the Most High and only Wise to make use of such a bond of authority over them, without which they

could not long subsist in human societies, in this wild condition wherein they are."

And he went on to remind them of the order of Parliament in 1646, that they should remove all obstructions which they had put in the way of those who had purchased the lands in Warwick, so that they might freely enjoy their rights. He also desired them no longer to assume any power over a few persons in Pawtuxet, and to treat their colony as a distinct government.* And his request was granted.

The Massachusetts were awfully requited for their iniquity in these affairs. For when they received Pumham as their subject, they furnished him with arms and ammunition, for hunting; and in Philip's war he joined against the English, and was very active in the war, and so was his son and grandson; and Pumham was killed within twenty miles of Boston, but a few days before Philip.† How righteous are God's judgments!

The Massachusetts were fond of comparing themselves to the Israelites who conquered Canaan; and I have recited a passage in which Captain Johnson has named seven sectaries which they were to subdue, as Israel did the seven nations in the promised land; but as these are far from being parallel cases, so was the success of the two people. For the seed of Jacob were completely victorious, but Massachusetts never subdued one of the sects which he named. And a new one now arose, who caused more disgrace to them than any others had done.

Out of the confusions in England, George Fox came forth as a zealous preacher of a new doctrine; and in 1650, he and his followers received the name of Quakers, from the trembling motions of their bodies, upon various occasions. They increased fast in England, and their sufferings animated them to travel far and near; and in the summer of 1656, some of them arrived at Boston, where they were confined. And when the commission-

* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 279—282.
† Hubbard on said War, p. 131. 175, 176.

ers of the United Colonies met at Plymouth in September, they received a letter from the court at Boston, which said, "Having heard some time since, that our neighbouring colony of Plymouth, our beloved brethren, in great part seem to be wanting to themselves in a due acknowledgment and encouragement of the ministry of the gospel, so as many pious ministers have (how justly we know not)* deserted their stations, callings, and relations; our desire is that some such course may be taken, as that a pious orthodox ministry may be restated among them, that so the flood of errors and principles of anarchy may be prevented. Here hath arrived amongst us several persons professing themselves Quakers, fit instruments to propagate the kingdom of Satan; for the securing of our neighbours from such pests, we have imprisoned them all till they be despatched away to the place from whence they came." And the commissioners gave advice accordingly.†

But such measures were not taken as long as Governor Bradford lived, who died on May 9, 1657, in his 69th year. And in June following, John Brown and James Cudworth, two of their assistants, were left out of office, and others were chosen, who were for more severe measures, though not equal to Massachusetts; who also wrote repeatedly to the rulers of Rhode Island colony, to try to draw them into like severity, but without any success.

The Quakers held that they had a light and spirit within them, which was their highest rule of action, and that the Scriptures were only a secondary rule; and that the external use of baptism and the Lord's supper was now out of date, and that they had those ordinances inwardly and spiritually. They also held themselves to be inspired by the Spirit of God to teach a more clear and

* One of these was Mr. Reyner, who went from Plymouth in 1654, and robbed them of all their church records, so that all the records they since have of former actings in their church, were collected from memory and private writings; as their late pastor told me. And how unjust was this!

† Hutchinson's Collections, p. 283—286.

perfect way than men had known since the days of the apostles, if they had not greater light than the apostles had. This spirit taught them to give no titles to rulers nor other men, and to use *thee* and *thou* to all. Humphrey Norton was scourged at Plymouth, in June, 1658, and then sent out of that colony; upon which he wrote to Governor Prince, and said,

"Thomas Prince, thou who hast bent thy heart to work wickedness, and with thy tongue hast thou set forth deceit; thou imaginest mischief upon thy bed, and hatchest thy hatred in thy secret chamber; the strength of darkness is over thee, and a malicious mouth hast thou opened against God and his anointed, and with thy tongue and lips hast thou uttered perverse things; thou hast slandered the innocent by railing, lying, and false accusations: and with thy barbarous heart hast thou caused their blood to be shed. Thou hast through all these things broke and transgressed the laws and ways of God, and equity is not before thy eyes. The curse causeless cannot come upon thee, nor the vengeance of God unjustly cannot fetch thee up; thou makest thyself merry with thy secret malice. The day of thy wailing will be like unto that of a woman that murders the fruit of her womb; the anguish and pain that will enter upon thy reins will be like gnawing worms lodging betwixt thy heart and liver: when these things come upon thee, and thy back bowed down with pain, in that day and hour thou shalt know to thy grief, that prophets of the Lord God we are, and the God of vengeance is our God. HUMPHREY NORTON."

This I copied from Plymouth records, where it was inserted, that posterity might know how their fathers were treated. And we may here also learn how secular force serves to inflame mistaken zeal; for the various punishments that were inflicted upon those people caused their zeal to rise the higher, until the commissioners of the United Colonies met at Boston in September, 1658; and then they advised each general court to make a law to banish Quakers on pain of death. And such a law was

made at Boston the next month, by the majority of one vote only; and the other colonies would not follow their example. Many other punishments were inflicted upon the Quakers in Plymouth and New Haven colonies, but little or none in Connecticut.

On October 20, 1659, William Robinson, Marmaduke Stevenson, and Mary Dyre, were condemned to die for returning after they were banished on pain of death; and the two men were hanged at Boston the 27th. And though the woman was then sent away, yet she returned, and was executed June 1, 1660. And on March 14, 1661, William Leddra was hanged there for the like crime. And as Charles the Second had been restored to the crown of England the year before, Governor Endicot and his court wrote to him in December, and said, "Our liberty to walk in the faith of the gospel, with all *good conscience*, was the cause of our transporting ourselves, with our wives, little ones, and our substance, from that pleasant land over the Atlantic Ocean into this vast wilderness, choosing rather the pure Scripture worship with a good conscience, in this remote wilderness among the heathen, than the pleasures of England with submission to the then so disposed and so far prevailing hierarchy, which we could not do without an evil conscience.—Concerning the Quakers, open and capital blasphemers, open seducers from the glorious Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed gospel, and from the Holy Scriptures as the rule of life, open enemies to the government itself as established in the hands of any but men of their own principles, malignant and assiduous promoters of doctrines directly tending to subvert both our church and state, after all other means for a long time used in vain, we were at last constrained for our own safety to pass a sentence of banishment against them upon pain of death. Such was their desperate turbulence both to religion and state, civil and ecclesiastical, as that the magistrate at last, in conscience both to God and man, judged himself called for the defence of all, to keep the passage with the point of the sword held towards them; this could do no harm to him that would be warned

thereby; their wittingly rushing themselves thereupon was their own act, we with humility conceive a crime bringing their blood upon their own heads."*

But William Robinson had given a paper to the court at Boston, in which he said, "The word of the Lord came expressly to me, which did fill me immediately with life, and power, and heavenly love, by which he constrained me, and commanded me to pass to the town of Boston, my life to lay down in his will, for the accomplishing of his service, that he had there to perform at the day appointed." And Marmaduke Stevenson gave them another paper, in which he said, "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Go to Boston, with thy brother William Robinson."†

Thus it appears that both sides pleaded a conscientious obedience to God in their actings against each other. And from hence we may see that the use of force in religious affairs is a *bloody practice.* And though King Charles put a stop to their hanging any more here, yet he said, "We cannot be understood hereby to direct or wish that any indulgence should be granted to those persons commonly called Quakers, whose principles being inconsistent with any kind of government, we have found it necessary, with the advice of our Parliament here, to make a sharp law against them, and are well content you do the like there."‡ And many more dissenters died in prison in his reign, than the bloody Queen Mary burnt at the stake. Open executions were now become more odious to the people than in former days of ignorance and superstition, while private cruelty was borne with or little regarded. But the vengeance of God will reach the most secret criminals, as well as the most open murderers.

* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 326, 327.
† Bishop, p. 127—133.
‡ Hutchinson's Collections, p. 379.

CHAPTER V.

Contention about baptism—Two Baptist churches formed—That at Boston is persecuted three years, and then three of them were banished—But many are for them here, and clear letters are written in their favour from England—After they had been confined a year they were released from prison—Injustice about Providence colony exposed—And they at last prevail—Williams disputes and writes against the Quakers—A division in Boston church—Clarke's faith, and his joyful end.

We shall now return to the affairs of baptism. They who supposed that each believer stood in the same relation to his children as Abraham did to his in the covenant of circumcision, brought none to baptism but the infants of communicants in their churches. But as those infants grew up and had children, and yet were not communicants themselves, a great trial came on to know what would become of succeeding generations. A convention of ministers met in 1657, and answered twenty-one questions upon the subject, and had them printed in London. But as this did not relieve them, another convention was called at Boston in 1659, and a synod in 1662, who introduced a halfway-covenant, so that they who would own it, and were regular in their lives, might have their children sprinkled without coming to the ordinance of the supper themselves. This was pleasing to many, while others thought it to be an apostasy from the first principles of the country; and the controversy about it, in various shapes, has continued ever since.

The first Baptist church in Wales was formed near Swansea, in that country, in 1649. Mr. John Miles was their chief leader, and they increased to about three hundred members, by the year 1662, when he was ejected out of his place, by a cruel act of Parliament, which turned two thousand teachers out of their places in one day, for refusing fully to conform to the church of England. He then came over, with the book of church re-

cords which he had kept there, and it remains in our Swansea to this day. And at the house of John Butterworth, in Rehoboth, in 1663, John Miles, elder, James Brown, Nicholas Tanner, Joseph Carpenter, John Butterworth, Eldad Kingsley, and Benjamin Alby, solemnly covenanted together as a church of Christ, to obey him in all his ordinances and commandments. They were in Plymouth colony, where they had ever enjoyed much more liberty than any had in Massachusetts. Mr. Brown was son to John Brown, who had long been a magistrate in that colony, and his son served them afterwards in that office for eleven years, in a time when his brethren in Massachusetts were fined, imprisoned, and banished. Indeed Mr. Miles and his church were complained of to court, for holding their meetings in Rehoboth, where was a Congregational church, and a small fine was imposed upon them for it. But in 1667, the court granted them the town of Swansea, where the church has continued by succession ever since, and is the fourth Baptist church in America.

The fifth was formed in Massachusetts. The light that was gained in 1653, when President Dunstar preached against infant baptism in Cambridge, caused Thomas Gould, who lived near him in Charlestown, to examine the matter so much, that when he had a child born in 1655, he could not bring it to be sprinkled. For this he was called before the church in Charlestown, and he told them that he could see no light for infant baptism, and therefore could not, in conscience, bring his child to it. Upon this, ministers, rulers, and brethren laboured with him, but could not convince him. He was still willing to commune with that church, if they would let him do it without carrying his child to an ordinance, which he had no faith in; and he read that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. And because of this, and also his going out of meeting when they sprinkled infants, they censured him in their church, and punished him in their courts for more than seven years. At length three Baptist brethren came over from England, recommended from churches there, and met with him and others in private houses. And on

May 28, 1665, Thomas Gould, Thomas Osborne, Edward Drinker, John George, Richard Goodale, William Turner, Robert Lambert, Mary Goodale, and Mary Newell, "joined in a solemn covenant, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to walk in fellowship and communion together in the practice of all the holy appointments of Christ, which he had, or should further make known unto them."

Goodale came from London, and Turner and Lambert from Dartmouth; the others were of our country, though none of them were church members before, but Gould and Osborne, both of Charlestown; from whence they were excommunicated, after they were baptized. These facts I gathered from their records and writings. They were of such a peaceable disposition, and so far from disturbing others, as the Quakers did, that their rulers hardly knew where to find them. But on August 20, 1665, Richard Russel, one of their magistrates, issued a warrant to the constable of Charlestown, requiring him in his majesty's name, to labour to discover where these people were, and to require them to attend on the established worship, or if they would not, to return their names and places of abode to the next magistrate. This was done, and some of them were brought before their court of assistants in September, to whom they presented a confession of their faith, in which they said, "Christ's commission to his disciples is to teach and baptize, and those who gladly receive the word and are baptized, are fit matter for a visible church." But this was loudly complained of, as implying that none were visible saints, who were not baptized by immersion; though they held that they ought to be visible saints before they were baptized. Thus men turn things upside down. And the court of assistants charged them to desist from their practice; and because they did not, Gould, Turner, Osborne, Drinker, and George, were brought before their general court in October, to whom they presented their confession of faith, and closed with saying, "If any take this to be heresy, then do we with the apostle confess, that after the way which they call heresy, we worship God, the Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets and apostles."

But the court called this a contemning of their authority and laws, and declared them to be no lawful church assembly, and said, "Such of them as are freemen are to be disfranchised, and all of them, upon conviction before any one magistrate or court, of their further proceeding herein, to be committed to prison until the general court shall take further order with them." Dr. Mather tries to vindicate the court herein, because the Baptists acted against the law of the government; but a noted Presbyterian minister says, "This condemns all the dissenting congregations that have been gathered in England, since the act of uniformity in the year 1662." And, says he, "Let the reader judge, who had most reason to complain; the New England churches, who would neither suffer the Baptists to live quietly in their communion, nor separate peaceably from it; or these unhappy persons, who were treated so unkindly for following the light of their consciences."*

Yet for following that light, they pursued them with fines and imprisonment, for three years; and then the court of assistants appointed a meeting at Boston, April 14, 1668, and called six ministers to manage a dispute whether those persons ought not to be banished, for holding a separate meeting from their churches. And they sent a warrant to Thomas Gould, which said, "You are required in his majesty's name to give notice to John Farnum, Thomas Osborne, and the company, and you and they are alike required to give your attendance, at the time and place above mentioned, for the end therein expressed." And as this was heard of at Newport, Mr. Clarke and his church sent William Hiscox, Joseph Tory, and Samuel Hubbard, to assist their brethren, and they got to Boston three days before the dispute. And it was carried on two days by those ministers, with allowing the Baptists but little liberty to speak for themselves; and it was closed by Mr. Mitchel, with the words of Mo-

* Magnalia, b. 7, p. 27. Neale on New England, vol. i. p. 304, 305.

ses, who said to Israel, If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment: and thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place, which the Lord shall choose, shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee; according to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do; thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand nor the left. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest (that standeth there before the Lord thy God) or unto the judge, even that man shall die; and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. Deut. xvii. 8—12.

Thus the sentence that was given from the law of God, in the place he chose, under the direction of the Urim and Thummim, was applied to the sentence of rulers and ministers at Boston, according to the laws of men. That they then applied this Scripture in this manner, appears from their colony records, compared with the writings of Samuel Hubbard and Mr. Gould. And thirty years after, Mr. Stoddard brought the same Scriptures to prove, that all men ought to submit to a national synod, as I shall prove hereafter.

Their general court in May called those Baptists before them, to know whether they were convinced of their evil in withdrawing from their churches, by what said ministers had laid before them; but they declared that they were not at all convinced of any evil in so doing. The court then called them obstinate Anabaptists, whom they were bound in conscience to proceed against; and gave sentence that Thomas Gould, William Turner, and John Farnum, should be gone out of their jurisdiction by the 20th July, not to return again without their leave. And

as Gould was then a prisoner, by the sentence of a former court, he was liberated from thence, in order that he might obey this sentence. Mr. Mitchel, who read off said scripture against them, died suddenly, eleven days before the time set in their sentence of banishment; but this gave no relief to these sufferers. And because they did not obey their sentence, these three men were imprisoned in Boston for near or quite a year.

How any who feared God, could go on to act against others, as these rulers and ministers did, may seem very strange in our days; but a careful search into their history will open the cause of it. Mr. Wilson, the first minister of Boston, was in great esteem with other ministers, who came round him in May past, and desired him to give his dying testimony of what he conceived to be the cause of the displeasure of God against this country. He told them that he had long feared the following sins as chief among others, which provoked God greatly, "1. Separation. 2. Anabaptism. 3. Corahism, when people rise up as Corah, against their ministers or elders, as if they took too much upon them, when indeed they do but rule for Christ, and according to Christ. 4. Another sin I take to be, the making light of, and not subjecting to the authority of synods."* These things he delivered as his dying testimony; and he died August 7, 1668, just after those Baptists were put in prison there. No one can easily tell how great impressions such things had upon their minds. Indeed some were of a different opinion, and when their general court met in the fall, they presented a petition in favour of those sufferers, and said, "We humbly beseech this honourable court, in their Christian mercy and bowels of compassion, to pity and relieve these poor prisoners; whose sufferings are doubtful to many, and some of great worth among ourselves, and grievous to the hearts of God's people at home and abroad. Your wisdoms may be pleased to think of some better expedient, and seriously to consider whether an indulgence, justifiable by the word of God, pleaded for and

* Morton, p. 195, 196.

practised by Congregational churches, may not, in this day of suffering to the people of God, be more effectual, safe, and inoffensive than other ways, which are always grievous and seldom find success." And they spoke highly of the good lives of those Baptists, as another plea in their favour. Captain Hutchinson, Captain Oliver, and many others signed this petition; but some were fined for it, and others were compelled to confess their fault, for reflecting upon the court. But Deputy Governor Willoughby was against these proceedings.* An account of these things was sent to England, and a letter from thence to Captain Oliver, said,

"*My dear Brother*,

"The ardent affection and great honours that I have for New England transport me, and I hope your churches shall ever be to me as the gates of heaven. I have ever been warmed with the apprehension of the grace of God towards me in carrying me thither. But now it is otherwise; with joy to ourselves and grief to you be it spoken. Now the greater my love is to New England, the more am I grieved at their failings. It is frequently said here, that they are swerved aside towards Presbytery; if so, the Lord restore them all. But another sad thing that much affects us is, to hear that you even in New England persecute your brethren; men sound in the faith; of holy life; agreeing in worship and discipline with you; only differing in the point of baptism. Dear brother, we here do love and honour them, hold familiarity with them, and take sweet counsel together; they lie in the bosom of Christ, and therefore they ought to be laid in our bosoms. In a word, we freely admit them into churches; few of our churches, but many of our members are Anabaptists; I mean baptized again. This is love in England; this is moderation; this is a right New Testament spirit. But do you now bear with, yea, more than bear with the Presbyterians? Yea, and that the worst sort of them, those who are the corruptest, rigidest; whose principles tend

* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 227. 269.

to corrupt the churches; turning the world into the church, and the church into the world; and which doth no less than to bring a people under mere slavery. It is an iron yoke, which neither we nor our Congregational brethren in Scotland were ever able to bear. I have heard them utter these words in the pulpit, that it is no wrong to make the Independents sell all they have, and depart the land; and many more things I might mention of that kind; but this I hint only, to shew what cause there is to withstand that wicked tyranny which was once set up in poor miserable Scotland, which I verily believe was a great wrong and injury to the reformation. The generality of them here, even to this day, will not freely consent to our enjoyment of our liberty; though, through mercy, the best and most reformed of them do otherwise. How much, therefore, would it concern dear New England to turn the edge against those who, if not prevented, will certainly corrupt and enslave, not only their own, but also your churches? Whereas Anabaptists are neither spirited or principled to injure or hurt your government nor your liberties; but rather these be the means to preserve your churches from apostasy, and to provoke them to their primitive purity, as they were in the first planting; in admission of members to receive none into your churches but visible saints, and in restoring the entire jurisdiction of every congregation complete and undisturbed. We are hearty and full for our Presbyterian brethren's equal liberty with ourselves; O that they had the same spirit towards us! But O how it grieves and affects us, that New England should persecute! Will you not give what you take? Is liberty of conscience your due? And is it not as due unto others who are sound in the faith? Amongst many Scriptures, that in the fourteenth of Romans much confirms me in liberty of conscience thus stated. To him that esteemeth any thing unclean, to him it is unclean. Therefore, though we approve of the baptism of the immediate children of church members, and of their admission into the church when they evidence a real work of grace; yet to those who in conscience believe the said baptism to be unclean, it is unclean.

Both that and mere ruling elders, though we approve of them, yet our grounds are mere interpretations of, and not any express scripture. I cannot say so clearly of any thing else in our religion, neither as to faith or practice. Now must we force our interpretations upon others, pope-like? How do you cast a reproach upon us who are Congregational in England, and furnish our adversaries with weapons against us! We blush and are filled with shame and confusion of face, when we hear of these things. Dear brother, we pray that God would open your eyes, and persuade the heart of your magistrates, that they may no more smite their fellow-servants, nor thus greatly injure us their brethren, and that they may not thus dishonour the name of God. My dear brother, pardon me, for I am affected; I speak for God, to whose grace I commend you all in New England; and humbly craving your prayers for us here, and remain your affectionate brother,

ROBERT MASCALL.

Finsbury, near Morefield, March 25, 1669."

This was copied by Mr. Samuel Hubbard, from whence I took it. Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Owen, and ten other ministers wrote to the Massachusetts rulers the same day, in a moving manner, and said, "We are sure you would be unwilling to put an advantage into the hands of some who seek pretences and occasions against our liberty, and to reinforce the former rigour. Now we cannot deny but this hath already in some measure been done, in that it hath been vogued, that persons of your way, principles, and spirit, cannot bear with dissenters from them. And as this greatly reflects upon us, so some of us have observed how already it has turned to your own disadvantage." Yet Dr. Mather says, "I cannot say that this excellent letter had immediately all the effect it should have had."* So that they were imprisoned about a year, because they would not voluntarily go out of that jurisdiction. And the year after, six magistrates gave a war-

* Magnalia, b. 7, p. 27, 28.

rant to take up Gould and Turner again, and Turner was actually put in prison upon the old sentence, and lay there a long time; but Gould went and lived and preached upon Noddle's island in the harbour, where they did not pursue him. For a great many rulers and others abhorred such conduct. But we must now take a review of other things.

When the rulers of Massachusetts yielded to the order of Parliament about Warwick, they were far from giving up their designs upon the lands in Providence colony. They claimed much of the west part of it, because of the Pequot conquest; and in 1657 and 1658, they sent men and got deeds of much land in the heart of the Narraganset country. The Narraganset Indians were also so uneasy about the death of their great sachem, Miantenimo, that they often attempted to revenge his death, but were overpowered by forces sent, once and again, from Massachusetts; and in 1660, they compelled those Indians to mortgage all their lands to them, for what they said was due to Massachusetts. And because two Baptist brethren, Tobias Sanders, and Robert Burdick, went to work upon lands which they had procured from their government in Westerly: they were imprisoned by Massachusetts in 1662, who then wrote to the rulers of Providence colony about it, as it appears by the records of both colonies. In the mean time, Mr. Winthrop went over to England, and obtained a charter, dated April 23, 1662, which united Connecticut and New Haven in one colony. Their eastern boundary was described to be "By the Narraganset river, commonly called Narraganset Bay, where said river falleth into the sea." And by this general description they claimed the Narraganset country. For when the commissioners of the united colonies met at Boston in September, they wrote to the rulers of Providence colony, and mentioned this charter to Connecticut, which they said, "Granted the lands at Pawcatuck and Narraganset, which we hope will prevail with you to require and cause your people to withdraw themselves, and desist from further disturbance."

Now they should have remembered, that in 1643, they

interpreted the Narraganset river, the western boundary of Plymouth colony, so as to include the lands where Gorton was settled; and all that Massachusetts did to him was founded upon that interpretation, which supposed Pawcatuck to be the western boundary of Plymouth colony. Yet now they would claim all the Narraganset country by Connecticut charter. What great blindness was here! And it was soon discovered by the charter which Mr. Clarke procured for his colony, dated July 8, 1663, which said, "Pawcatuck river shall be also called, alias, Narraganset river; and to prevent future disputes that otherwise might arise thereby, forever hereafter shall be construed, deemed, and taken to be the Narraganset river, in the late grant to Connecticut colony, mentioned as the eastwardly bounds of that colony." Yet they were so resolute that it should not be so, that they proposed to send an agent over to England, to get that line altered. Upon which Mr. Williams wrote to Connecticut rulers, and said:

"It looks like a prodigy or monster, that countrymen among savages in a wilderness; that professors of God and one Mediator, of an eternal life, and that this is like a dream, should not be content with those vast large tracts which all the other colonies have, (like platters and tables full of dainties,) but pull and snatch away their poor neighbour's bit or crust; and a crust it is, and a dry, hard one too, because of the natives' continual troubles, trials, and vexations." And as to claims from the Pequot conquest, he said, "Having ocular knowledge of persons, places, and transactions, I did honestly and conscientiously, as in the holy presence of God, draw up from Pawcatuck river, which I then believed and still do is free from all English claims and conquests. For although there were some Pequots on this side the river, who by reason of some sachems' marriages with some on this side, lived in a kind of neutrality with both sides; yet upon the breaking out of the war, they relinquished their land to the possession of their enemies the Narragansets and Nyanticks, and their land never came into the condition of the lands on the other side, which the English

by conquest challenged: so that I must affirm, as in God's holy presence, I tenderly waived to touch a foot of land in which I knew the Pequot wars were maintained, and were properly Pequot, being a gallant country. And from Pawcatuck river hitherward, being but a patch of ground, full of troublesome inhabitants, I did, as I judged inoffensively, draw our poor and inconsiderable line." And he says of their second charter, "Mr. Winthrop, upon some mistake, had intrenched upon our line, and it is said upon the lines of other charters also; but upon Mr. Clarke's complaint, your grant was called in again, and it had never been returned, but upon a report that the agents, Mr. Winthrop, and Mr. Clarke, were agreed by mediation of friends; and it is true they came to a solemn agreement under hands and seals, which agreement was never violated on our part."*

This letter was dated June 22, 1670. And though the case was not then carried again to England, yet this line was not settled in fifty years after. But in 1720, Governor Jenks was sent over as agent upon this controversy, and it was settled in 1729, the line to be Pawcatuck river. And in 1741, their easterly line was settled, which gave their colony Littlecompton, Tiverton, Bristol, Warren, Barrington, and Cumberland, which they had not enjoyed before. Thus all the lands, and all the liberties that were asked for by Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke, were finally obtained in that colony, though others exerted all their powers against it. And these things give great encouragement to all who may come after us, to perseverance in right ways, and a warning against all injustice and oppression.

Mr. Williams had also another difficulty now to encounter, in which he was successful. Though Mr. Coddington, and other men of note, submitted to his government in 1656: yet as they soon joined with the Quakers, they refused to be active in that government. Their plea was, that they were obliged in conscience to refrain from taking any oath. Therefore the form of an engage-

* Historical Society, vol. i. p. 278—280.

ment to the government was enacted for them in 1665, which it was hoped they would take; but in March, 1666, they objected against it, and prevailed with their Assembly to make a law to allow them to make their submission in their own words, either before the court or before two magistrates. And then they were as fond of being rulers as any men: and Mr. Nicholas Easton was governor in 1672 and 1673, and Mr. Coddington in 1674 and 1675, who were then Quakers. And as Williams believed that their principles were hurtful to government, as well as dangerous to the souls of men, and George Fox and other teachers of theirs were come over, he wrote fourteen propositions upon the subject, and sent them to Newport, proposing to Fox or his friends, to hold a dispute upon seven of them at Newport, and upon the other seven at Providence, upon any days that they should appoint. Fox then sailed for England, but John Stubs, John Burnyeat, and William Edmondson undertook it; and Williams held a dispute with them in August, 1672, three days at Newport, and one at Providence. And he wrote a large account of it, which was printed at Cambridge, 1676; and soon after it came out, several of the Quakers were left out of office. Upon this, Mr. Coddington sent the book over to Fox, with a bitter letter against Williams; and he with Burnyeat wrote a reply, which they called, "A New England firebrand quenched." And it was printed in England, in 1678.

Mr. Williams dedicated his book to them, wherein he said, "From my childhood, now above threescore years, the Father of lights and mercies touched my soul with the love of himself, to his only begotten Son, the true Lord Jesus, to his Holy Scriptures, &c. His infinite wisdom hath given me to see the city, court, and country, the schools and universities of my native country, to converse with some Turks, Jews, Papists, and all sorts of Protestants; and by books to know the affairs and religions of all countries. My conclusion is, that *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*, (Matt. ix. 2,) is one of the joyfullest sounds that ever came to poor sinful ears. How to obtain this sound from the mouth of the

Mediator who spoke it, is the greatest dispute between the Protestants and the bloody whore of Rome; and this is also the greatest point between the Protestants and yourselves, as also, in order to this, about what the true Lord Jesus Christ is."

They were so much upon what Christ did within them, that he says George Fox, in a former book, "cannot endure to hear the word *human*, as being a new name and never heard of in Scripture. Fox knows, that if Christ Jesus be granted to have had such a soul and body as is human or common to man, down falls their Dagon before the ark of God, viz. their idol of a Christ called light within them."* To which it was answered, "There is no such word that calleth Christ's body and soul *human;* and whether is Christ's body celestial or terrestrial."†

And this opinion prevailed so much at Newport, that Mr. Clarke and his church, after much labour, excluded three men and two women from their communion, October 16, 1673, for holding "That the man Christ Jesus was not now in heaven nor earth, nor anywhere else, but that his body was entirely lost." This Mr. Comer says he took from their records. Such was their language then, let it be altered ever so much since. And as to government, Fox published a book in 1659, in which he said, "that the magistrate of Christ, the help government for him, he is in the light and power of Christ; and he is to subject all under the power of Christ, into his light, else he is not a faithful magistrate; and his laws are agreeable, and answerable according to that of God in every man."‡ Williams brought this to prove that their spirit was arbitrary and persecuting; but Fox said, "Is there one word of persecution here? or can Roger Williams think himself a Christian, and look upon it to be persecution, for Christ's magistrates by Christ's light and power, to subject all under the power of Christ, and to bring all into this light of Christ? or can he think

* Williams, p. 51. † Fox, p. 43.
‡ Williams, p. 207, 208

such an one an unfaithful magistrate? or are those laws, and the execution of them, persecution, that are agreeable and answerable to that of God in every man? These are George Fox's words. Such magistrates, such laws, such power, and light, and subjection, is George Fox for, and no other."*

And as two women had appeared as naked as they were born, before many people, the one at Salem and the other at Newbury, and had been whipped for it, which George Bishop called persecution, Williams mentioned it, and that he thought persons must be bewitched to call this persecution. But Fox said, "We do believe thee, in that dark, persecuting, bloody spirit, that thou and the New England priests are bewitched in, you cannot believe that you are naked from God and his clothing, and blind; and therefore hath the Lord in his power moved some of his sons and daughters to go naked; yea, they did tell them in Oliver's days, and the Long Parliament's, that God would strip them of their church profession and of their power, as naked as they were. And so they were true prophets and prophetesses to the nation, as many sober men have confessed since; though thou and the old persecuting priests in New England remain in your blindness and nakedness."†

And through their book they called him a cruel persecutor for disputing against their principles and behaviour, while he abhorred the use of any force against them on that account. And having obtained his end in the dispute, he never troubled them or himself any more about it.

But the dispute about baptism was again brought up in Massachusetts. Mr. John Devenport had published his testimony against the result of the synod of 1662, which allowed persons to bring their children to baptism, who were not fit to come to the Lord's supper themselves; and as a majority of the first church in Boston were of his mind, they obtained him for their pastor, soon after Mr. Wilson died. But a minor part of the church were for the new scheme, and they separated from the major-

* Fox, p. 229, 230. † Fox, p. 9.

ity, pleading that Mr. Devenport had no right to leave his people at New Haven, in order to be a minister in Boston. And in May, 1669, a number of ministers assisted in forming the minor party into another church; and in July Governor Bellingham called his council together, fearing, he said, "A sudden tumult, some persons attempting to set up an edifice for public worship, which he apprehended to be detrimental to the public peace." But the majority of his council voted to let them go on; though a hot contention about it continued through the year. And in May, 1670, the house of representatives chose a committee to inquire into the causes of God's displeasure against this land; and they reported that they were, "declension from the primitive foundation work, innovations in doctrine and worship, opinion and practice; an invasion of the rights, liberties, and privileges of churches, an usurpation of a lordly and prelatical power over God's heritage, subversion of gospel order, &c." And the acting of the ministers who formed said new church they called, "irregular, illegal, and disorderly." But of fifty members who were in their next house, there were but twenty of these; and they declared against what the others had done.* Such was the influence of ministers in that day. And in May, 1682, Edward Randolph, who was trying to get away their charter, wrote to England, and said, "There was a great difference betwixt the old church and the members of the new church, about baptism and their members joining in full communion with either church. This was so high that there was imprisoning of parties and great disturbances; but now, hearing of my proposals for ministers to be sent over, they are now joined together, about a fortnight ago, and pray to God to confound the devices of all who disturb their peace and liberties."† That new church is since called the Old South.

Whilst Mr. Clarke was in England, a new Baptist church was formed out of the first church in Newport, holding to the laying on of hands upon every member

* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 272—274. † His Collections, p. 532.

after baptism, about the year 1656, which was the third Baptist church in America, and is still continued by succession. And as other colonies were then trying to draw his colony into violent measures against the Quakers, the Legislature of Rhode Island colony wrote to Mr. Clarke and said, "We have found, not only your ability and diligence, but also your love and care to be such concerning the welfare and prosperity of this colony, since you have been intrusted with the more public affairs thereof, surpassing the no small benefit which we had of your presence here at home, that we in all straits and encumbrances, are emboldened to repair to you for further and continued care, counsel, and help; finding that your solid and Christian demeanor hath gotten no small interest in the hearts of our superiors, those noble and worthy senators, with whom you had to do in our behalf, as it hath constantly appeared in our addresses to them, we have by good and comfortable proof found, having had plentiful experience thereof." And so they went on to entreat him to use all his influence in their favour, that they might not be compelled to persecute the Quakers, and he succeeded therein. This was dated, November 5, 1658, the month after the law was made at Boston to banish them on pain of death.

Mr. Clarke continued their agent in England, until he obtained the charter from the king which I mentioned before, to procure which he mortgaged his farm in Newport, willing to venture his estate in so good a cause. He came over to Newport in 1664, and their assembly voted to pay him for all his expenses, in obtaining their charter and other ways, and to give him a considerable reward for his services; but it was a long time before they paid him only for his expenses in their service.

From that time he continued the pastor of the first church in Newport, until he died in peace. A small church was formed out of that, in December, 1671, holding to the seventh-day Sabbath, which yet continues. This made the sixth Baptist church in America. Mr. Clarke left a confession of his faith in writing, in which he said,

"The decree of God is that whereby he hath from eternity set down with himself what shall come to pass in time. Eph. i. 11. All things, with their causes, effects, circumstances, and manner of being, are decreed by God. Acts ii. 23. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, &c. Acts iv. 28. This decree is most wise. Rom. xi. 33. Most just. Rom. ix. 13, 14. Eternal. Ep. i. 4, 5. 2 Thess. ii. 13. Necessary. Ps. xxxiii. 11. Prov. xix. 21. Unchangeable. Heb. vi. 17. Most free. Rom. ix. 18. And the cause of all good. James i. 17. But not of any sin. 1 John i. 5. The special decree of God concerning angels and men is called predestination. Rom. viii. 30. Of the former, viz. angels, little is spoken in the Holy Scriptures; of the latter, more is revealed, not unprofitable to be known. It may be defined the wise, free, just, eternal, and unchangeable sentence or decree of God, determining to create and govern men for his special glory, viz. the praise of his glorious mercy and justice. Rom. ix. 17, 18, and xi. 36. Election is the decree of God, of his free love, grace, and mercy, choosing some men to faith, holiness, and eternal life, for the praise of his glorious mercy. 1 Thess. i. 4. 2 Thess. ii. 13. Rom. viii. 29, 30. The cause which moved the Lord to elect them who are chosen was none other but his mere good will and pleasure. Luke xii. 32. The end is the manifestation of the riches of his grace and mercy. Rom. ix. 23. Eph. i. 6. The sending of Christ, faith, holiness, and eternal life, are the effects of his love, by which he manifesteth the infinite riches of his grace. In the same order God doth execute this decree in time, he did decree it in his eternal counsel. 1 Thess. v. 9. 2 Thess. ii. 13. Sin is the effect of man's free will, and condemnation is an effect of justice inflicted upon man for sin and disobedience. A man in this life may be sure of his election. 2 Pet. i. 10. 1 Thess. i. 4. Yea, of his eternal happiness, but not of his eternal reprobation; for he that is now profane may be called hereafter."

This faith, which was also held by Mr. Williams, moved

them to spend their lives for the welfare of mankind, and to establish the first government upon earth, since the rise of antichrist, which gave equal liberty, civil and religious, to all men therein. Though many have imagined that because the leaders of Massachusetts professed this faith, that it was inconsistent with the allowance of equal privileges to all mankind. Therefore I thought it best here to give a view of the faith of these men, who were persecuted by Massachusetts, because they thought that good men ought to enforce their faith with the sword. But this last opinion should ever bear the blame of all the injuries which they did to others, and not the faith above described.

Mr. Clarke was influenced so much by faith and love, that through many changes, and doing of public business, both in Europe and America, I have never found one blemish upon his character, noticed in any record or writing that I ever saw. In the last day of his life he said,

"Whereas, I, John Clarke, of Newport, in the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in New England, physician, am at this present, through the abundant goodness and mercy of my God, though weak in body, yet sound in my memory and understanding, and being sensible of the inconveniences that may ensue in case I should not set my house in order, before this spirit of mine be called by the Lord to remove out of this tabernacle, do therefore make and declare this my last will and testament, in manner following: willingly and readily resigning up my soul unto my merciful Redeemer, through faith in whose death I firmly hope and believe to escape from that second hurting death, and through his resurrection and life, to be glorified with him in life eternal. And my spirit being returned out of this frail body, in which it hath conversed for about sixty-six years, my will is, that it be decently interred, without any vain ostentation, between my loving wives, Elizabeth and Jane, already deceased, in hopeful expectation that the same Redeemer who hath laid down a price both for my soul and

body, will raise it up at the last day a spiritual one, that they may together be singing hallelujah unto him to all eternity."* O how glorious is such an end!

CHAPTER VI.

A terrible Indian war—It prevailed most in Massachusetts—Some whom they had employed against Providence colony, revenge themselves on their employers—But the Baptist sufferers now overcame evil with good, and the war was closed—Many Christian Indians never joined in it—Two Baptist churches formed among them, and others in our days—More severities against the Baptists—Their house for worship nailed up in Boston, and writings against them, which they answered—Death of some of their ministers—The Massachusetts charter vacated—Then some of their eyes were opened to see their errors.

We are now come to the time when they had the most terrible war with the Indians that ever was known in this part of the country. And in it there appeared a vast difference between the Indians who had been well treated before, and those who had been treated injuriously. The execution of the great sachem of the Narragansets, after he had been taken captive, and then delivered up to the

* Taken from his original will, dated April 20, 1676; and he left our world the same day. His first wife was Elizabeth Harges, who had an annual income of twenty pounds sterling from lands left her in Bedfordshire. In a power of attorney to recover it, given May 12, 1656, he styled himself John Clarke, physician of London. She died at Newport, without issue; and he married Jane Fletcher in February, 1671, by whom he had a daughter; but they both died in 1672. His third wife was the widow Sarah Davis, who survived him, and he gave her the use of his farm in Newport, during her natural life, and then the income of it was to go to the poor, and to support civil and religious teaching. It has produced 200 dollars a year, and it has thus been a public benefit ever since. His brother, Joseph Clarke, was sometimes a magistrate in their government, and he was a member of the first church in Newport, above forty years; and his posterity are numerous and respectable unto this day.

English, raised such a spirit of resentment among them, that they often attempted to revenge his death. And such danger of their doing it appeared in 1645, that the colony raised an army against them, when an instruction to their general said, "You are to use your best endeavours to gain the enemies' canoes, or utterly to destroy them; and herein you may make good use of the Indians our confederates, as you may do upon other occasions, having due regard to the honour of God, who is both our sword and shield, and to the *distance* which is to be observed betwixt Christians and barbarians, as well in wars as in other negotiations."* And though fear of gunpowder, want of union among themselves, and the want of an able leader, suspended the war for many years, yet it now came on terribly.

Philip, a son and successor to old Massassoit, had been preparing for it for several years: and because it was discovered to the English, by one of his friends, that friend was murdered in Middleborough, and the murderers were taken and executed at Plymouth. Upon this the war broke out immediately, and nine men were killed in Swansea, June 24, 1675, and the alarm was given; and an army both from Boston and Plymouth met there in four days, and made their head quarters at the house of Mr. Miles, the Baptist minister of Swansea. Philip soon fled from his station at Mount Hope, now Bristol, over to the east side of the great river. And upon this the Massachusetts army marched into the Narraganset country, and brought the Indians there to promise not to join with Philip, and then they returned, and joined with Plymouth forces to fight against him. But he soon came back over the river, and made his way up into Worcester county, where some English were killed in July, as Captain Hutchinson and others were on August 2, near Brookfield. Major Willard then marched up and relieved that town, upon which the Indians went further westward, and burned most of the houses in Deerfield, September 1, and Northfield a few days after, when one captain and

* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 151.

about twenty men were slain. And on September 18, as Captain Lothrop went with his company to guard some teams, in bringing off grain from Deerfield, they were surprised by the Indians, who slew him and more than seventy of his men. Deerfield was then deserted, and thirty houses were burned in Springfield, and some men slain there. On October 19, Hatfield was assaulted by many Indians, but they were bravely repulsed, and many of them retired into Narraganset.

Upon a small tract of upland, within a large swamp in that country, they had built and stored the strongest fort that they ever had in these parts. Therefore the colonies raised an army of a thousand men, under General Winslow, and destroyed it on December 19, with great stores of provision, and many hundreds of the enemy; but with the loss of six English captains, and one hundred and seventy, some said two hundred and ten men killed or wounded. A terrible storm of snow made the case much more distressing. And as much provision was destroyed in that fort, the Indians were greatly distressed, and many perished; but a great thaw in January, 1676, enabled them to get some food out of the ground, and they again went up northward, and burned the deserted houses in Mendon, and made an onset upon Lancaster, February 10, burning their houses, and killed or captivated forty persons, of whom Mrs. Rowlandson, wife to the minister, was one, who published an account of her captivity. Similar mischiefs were done at Groton, Malborough, Sudbury, and Chelmsford; and on February 21, they came down upon Medfield, but twenty miles from Boston, and burned many houses, and killed eighteen men. On the 25th they did damage at Weymouth, still nearer to Boston. On March 12, they took Clarke's garrison in Plymouth, killing several persons; and on the next day they burned all Groton to the ground, so that the place was deserted for some time. In the same month they burned many houses in Warwick, Providence, and Rehoboth. And on March 26, near Patucket river, Captain Pierce engaged with a body of Indians, who proved to be more than he expected, when he and near sixty of his men

were cut off, though it was said they slew one hundred and forty Indians. And the western part of Massachusetts was now in great distress, so that new forces were raised to help them.

William Turner, and other Baptists, who had suffered from the rulers of the government, were as ready to lend a helping hand against the common enemy, as any among them. He had offered his service in the beginning of the war, but it was not then accepted; but now he was called forth, and made captain of a company, and his brother Drinker lieutenant, and the company were mainly Baptists, who marched up in the beginning of this month, with others, and drove off the enemy from Northampton, March 14. Many of the enemy then came down the country again, and did much mischief, as before described; and they also killed Captain Wadsworth and about thirty of his men at Sudbury, April 18. Most of the western forces were now come down the country, and Captain Turner was left the chief commander above.

Upon this the enemy felt more secure, and seven or eight hundred of th to the great falls above Deerfield upon the .. design. Two captive lads made their escape, and informed how secure the Indians were, upon which Captain Turner and Captain Holyoke collected about one hundred and seventy men, and went up silently in the night, and tied their horses at some distance, and a little before break of day, May 18, came upon them unawares, "fired into their very wigwams, killing many upon the place, and frightening others with the sudden alarm of their guns, made them run into the river, where the swiftness of the stream carried them down a steep fall, and they perished in the waters; some, getting into canoes, were sunk or overset by the shooting of our men; others, creeping under the bank of the river, were espied by our men and killed with their swords. Some of their prisoners owned afterwards that they lost above three hundred men, some of them their best fighting men that were left. Nor did they seem ever to recover themselves after this defeat, but their ruin followed directly upon it." When they were first fired upon, they cried

out, Mohawks! but when they discovered their mistake in the morning, they rallied their forces, and Captain Turner being unwell, and not able to guide their retreat so agreeably, thirty-eight men fell, of whom he was one, who was afterwards found and buried.* All the rest of the Baptists were spared and returned.

Captain Benjamin Church of Duxborough, in Plymouth colony, carried his family on to Rhode Island in the beginning of the war, and he was very serviceable therein. And as he knew that the Sokonet Indians were forced into the war by Philip, he ventured over among them in June, 1676, and gained them over to the English to fight against Philip, and they were very successful from day to day, until they killed him at Mount Hope, August 12, 1676, after which peace was soon restored in these parts.†

This summary of that cruel war is collected from a variety of histories and accounts. Connecticut forces were very helpful in the war, and they lost three captains at the Narraganset fort: namely, Gallop, Seily, and Marshal, and a number of their men; but they had scarce any damage done in any of their towns, while they and the Mohegan Indians did great exploits in the war. It began in Plymouth colony, where a few men were killed, and Captain Pierce was of their colony. But Massachusetts lost eight captains, viz.: Hutchinson, Beers, Lothrop, Devenport, Gardner, Johnson, Wadsworth, and Turner, and a great many men. And the towns of Northfield, Deerfield, Brookfield, Mendon, Lancaster, and Groton, were all broken up for some years; and they lost a vast deal of property.

Mr. John Eliot of Roxbury, had begun to teach Christianity to some Indians about 1646, and Mr. Winslow, their agent in England, obtained a charter from the Parliament in 1649, to incorporate a society to promote that work; and Eliot learned the Indian language, and translated the Bible into it, which passed one edition in 1664,

* Hubbard's History, p. 157—161.

† Pumham, before spoken of, was killed a few days before Philip.

and another in 1684, with some other books. Mr. Daniel Gookin, a magistrate and a major-general in their government, was also his helper in the affair; and they had formed twelve praying societies among the Indians before this war, some of them as high up the country as Dudley and Woodstock; but they were all scattered in the war, and many of their praying Indians became bloody enemies, and were slain in the war, or hanged after it at Boston. Those that remained were afterwards collected by Mr. Eliot into four societies; but they are all dissolved since.

But the Indians on Cape Cod, and on the islands south of it, scarce any of them ever joined in the war against the English. They had not only been treated in a friendly manner, but much pains had also been taken to teach them Christianity. Mr. Richard Bourn engaged in that work as early as 1658, and in 1670 he was ordained the pastor of a church among them, by the assistance of Mr. Eliot and others. And in 1674, he wrote to Major Gookin, that upon and near the Cape there were seven praying societies among the Indians, of whom an hundred and forty could read, and some of them could write. Marshpee, between Sandwich and Barnstable, was the greatest seat of them; and a religious society has continued there ever since, and a Baptist church was formed and organized among them in 1797.

Mr. Thomas Mayhew obtained a grant of Martha's Vineyard, and went to live there in 1642, where he was the chief ruler of the English inhabitants, and his son Thomas was their minister. And about 1646 he began to preach to the Indians on the island; and to promote the cause, his father informed them, that by an order from the crown of England he was to govern the English who should inhabit there; that his royal master had power far above the Indian monarchs, but that as he was great and powerful, so he was a lover of justice, and would not invade their jurisdiction, but would assist them if need required; that religion and government were two distinct things, and their sachems might retain their just authority, though their subjects became Christians. And he prac-

tised accordingly, and would not suffer any to injure them, either in goods or lands. They always found a father and protector in him; and he was so far from introducing any form of government among them against their wills, that he first convinced them of the advantage of it, and even brought them to desire him to introduce and settle it. And a Christian church was formed among them in 1659, in which four officers were ordained in 1670, by Mr. Eliot and others. And they had soon two churches on the Vineyard, and one on Nantucket. Old Mr. Mayhew said in 1674, "There are ten Indian preachers, of good knowledge and holy conversation; seven jurisdictions, and six meetings every Lord's day." So many were on the Vineyard, besides a church at Nantucket.

And when the war came on the next year, the Christian Indians were furnished with arms and ammunition to defend the islands against the enemy; and they were so faithful therein, that when any landed to solicit them to join in the war, though some were related by blood and others by marriage, yet the islanders directly brought them before the governor to attend his pleasure. And by a divine blessing on these means, though the Indians on the island were twenty to one of the English, yet they lived in peace and security through all that dreadful war on the main land. Young Mr. Mayhew had sailed for England, in 1657, and was lost at sea, but he left Peter Folger, a schoolmaster, among the Indians; and he removed to Nantucket about four years after, and taught them there. He became a Baptist, and there was a Baptist church formed among the Indians on the Vineyard, and another at Nantucket, by 1693.* That on the Vineyard continues to this day, but the Indians are nearly all dead on Nantucket. Peter Folger was grandfather to the famous Dr. Benjamin Franklin.

Ninagret, sachem of the south part of the Narragansets, did not join in that war, and their successors have continued there in Charlestown; and in and after 1741, many

* Magnalia, b. 6, p. 56. Appendix to Mayhew's Indian Converts, p. 291—296. Historical Society, vol. i. p. 168—207. vol. iii. p. 189, 190.

of them were hopefully converted, and a Baptist church was formed among them, which still remains, though many of them have removed up to the Oneida country. Also in 1741, many of the Mohegans were happily changed, of whom Samsom Occum was one; but many of them have removed also to said Oneida country.

As ministers and rulers were still earnest to keep up the power of the church over the world, so they could not do it without oppressing the Baptists, who increased considerably. Hence their law to banish them was reprinted in 1672; and they were often fined or imprisoned. Mr. William Hubbard, who preached their election sermon at Boston, May 3, 1676, said, "It is made, by learned and judicious writers, one of the undoubted rights of sovereignty to determine what religion shall be publicly professed and exercised within their dominions. Why else do we in New England, that profess the doctrine of Calvin, yet practise the discipline of them called Independent or Congregational churches, but because the authority of the country is persuaded that is most agreeable to the mind of God?"* But why did they and their fathers dissent from the church of England? In a dedication of his sermon to their rulers, he said, "If he was not mistaken who said, it is morally impossible to rivet the Christian religion into the body of a nation without infant baptism, by proportion it will necessarily follow, that the neglect or disuse thereof will directly tend to root it out." But this was spoken with a view that good men should ever have the government in their hands.

Hence, when Dr. Increase Mather preached their election sermon, May 23, 1677, he referred to Mr. Cotton, who said, "The Lord keep us from being bewitched with the whore's cup, lest, whilst we seem to detest and reject her with open face of profession, we do not bring her in by the back door of toleration."† And Mather said, "I believe that antichrist hath not at this day a more probable way to advance his kingdom of darkness, than by a toleration of all religions and persuasions."‡ This he reprinted

* Said Sermon, p 35. † Tenet washed, p. 192.
‡ His Sermons, p. 106.

with other sermons, in 1685, after their charter was taken away. But he suffered so much directly after, that he and others got such a toleration established in Boston in 1693, though they could not get it extended through the country. For fifty years before they lost their charter, no man had a vote for their ministers or rulers, but communicants in their churches; but under their second charter, the wicked had as much power in their government as the righteous, which discovered the necessity of a toleration; though their present views were such as prevented their seeing it.

In September, 1679, Mather was scribe of a synod that was called to give their opinion about what were the causes of the judgments of God upon the land; and in their result they said, "Men have set up their thresholds by God's thresholds, and their posts by his posts. Quakers are false worshippers, and such Anabaptists as have risen up amongst us, in opposition to the churches of the Lord Jesus, receiving into their society those who have been for scandal delivered unto Satan; yea, and improving those as administrators of holy things, who have been (as doth appear) justly under censure, do no better than set up altars against the Lord's altar." And their result was approved by their general court.*

Upon the coming out of this, from the highest authority in the country, the Baptists carefully reviewed their past conduct, and they found that four men who were censured by Congregational churches, before they received them into their church, and one of them was of Dr. Mather's church, which served to raise his resentment. They therefore sent and obtained copies of their dealings with him, which discovered that the member got angry when the church was dealing with him, and spake and acted in a wrong manner. Upon which the Baptists obliged him to offer satisfaction to that church, which he did both by word and by writing; but as his principles were inconsistent with a returning into their communion, they would not revoke their censure.†

* Magnalia, b. v. p. 87—89.

† Russel's Narrative, p. 8. Willard's answer, p. 21.

This Baptist church had increased so much, that in February, 1677, they concluded to divide into two churches; but in January, 1678, they agreed to build them a meeting-house in Boston, and not to divide till they could get a minister settled there. Mr. Miles of Swansea had often preached to them, and they requested him to become their pastor, and for Mr. John Russell to supply his place in Swansea. But he returned home, and Mr. Russell was ordained in Boston, July 28, 1679. They built their house for worship so cautiously, as not to let others know what it was designed for, until they met in it, February 15, 1679. But in May following, a law was made to take it from them, if they continued to meet in it; therefore they refrained from it for a while. News of that law was sent to England, from whence the king wrote to the rulers here, July 24, 1679, and said, "We shall henceforth expect that there shall be suitable obedience in respect of freedom and liberty of conscience, so as those that desire to serve God in the way of the church of England, be not thereby made obnoxious or discountenanced from sharing in the government, much less that any other of our good subjects (not being Papists) who do not agree in the Congregational way, be by law subjected to fines or forfeitures, or other incapacities, for the same; which is a severity the more to be wondered at, wherein liberty of conscience was made one principal motive for your first transportation into those parts."*

Some friends in London informed the Baptists of this, upon which they met in their house again, but their chief leaders were brought before the court of Assistants for it, in March, 1680; and because they would not promise not to meet there again, the court sent an officer, who nailed up the doors of the house, and forbid their meeting there any more upon their peril, without leave from court. Not long after the house was opened by an unknown hand, and they met there till May, when the Baptists were convented before the general court of Boston, and pleaded that their house was built when there was no law against

* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 520.

it, and the king had now written in their favour. But the court only forgave what was past, and forbid their meeting there any more. In the March before, Dr. Increase Mather published a pamphlet against the Baptists in general, and against those in Boston in particular. And in May Mr. Russell wrote an answer to what he had said against their character, and it was printed in London the same year, with a preface signed by William Kiffen, Hansard Knollys, Daniel Dyke, William Collins, John Harris, and Nehemiah Coxe, noted Baptist ministers. And they said therein, "It seems most strange that our Congregational brethren in New England, who with liberal estates, chose rather to depart from their native soil into a wilderness, than to be under the lash of those who upon religious pretences took delight to smite their fellow-servants, should exercise towards others the like severity that themselves with so great hazard and hardship sought to avoid; especially considering that it is against their brethren, who profess and appeal to the same rule with themselves for their guidance in the worship of God, and the ordering their whole conversation." And they observed that persecutors in England then tried to justify themselves by these severities in America.

In 1681, Mr. Willard, of Boston, wrote an answer to Russell, and Dr. Mather wrote a preface to it, in which he said, "I would entreat the brethren who have subscribed the epistle to consider that the place may sometimes make a great alteration as to indulgence to be expected. It is evident that such toleration is not only lawful in one place, but a necessary duty, which would be destructive in another place. That which is needful to ballast a great ship, will sink a small boat. From whence we may learn, that it was their weakness and not their strength, which caused them to be so hard with their Baptist brethren. For the extending of baptism to infants in a state of nature, and supporting their worship by force, in the name of their king, who forbid it, was indeed weak business.

Mr. John Russell, pastor of the Baptist church in Boston, died there December 21, 1680, much lamented, and

his posterity are respectable among us to this day. Elder Isaac Hull was still living, but he was aged and infirm. Therefore the church wrote to London, June 27, 1681, and said, "We conceive that there is a prospect of good encouragement for an able minister to come over; in that there seems to be an apparent and general apostasy among the churches who have professed themselves Congregational in this land; whereby many have their eyes opened, by seeing the declensions and confusion that is among them." To this they received a kind answer, dated October 13, 1681, signed by William Kiffen, Hansard Knollys, Daniel Dyke, William Collins, Nehemiah Coxe, Edward Williams, William Dix, Robert Snelling, Tobias Russell, Maurice King, and John Skinner. And on July 20, 1684, they received John Emblen from England, who became their pastor for about fifteen years, until his death.

Elder Thomas Olney was pastor of the Baptist church in Providence, for above forty years, till he died in 1682, leaving a good character, and his posterity are numerous to this day. Obadiah Holmes was pastor of the first church in Newport, from soon after Mr. Clarke's death, until he died, October, 15, 1682, aged 76, and his posterity are now large, in New England and New Jersey.

By assistance from Boston, a Baptist church was formed at Kittery, in the province of Maine, in September, 1682, when William Scraven was ordained their pastor; but cruel persecution soon scattered them, some to South Carolina, some to New Jersey, and some to Boston again, where they were useful afterwards. Mr. Miles of Swansea died there in a good old age, February 3, 1683; and Mr. Samuel Luther succeeded him in his office for more than thirty years. In April, the same year, Mr. Roger Williams was taken to rest, and he hath a large posterity among us to this day. He was honoured of God to be instrumental of founding the first civil government upon earth, since the rise of antichrist, that allowed equal religious liberty, and he was serviceable therein unto the age of eighty-four. And for godly sincerity in public actings, and overcoming evil with

good, it is believed no man on earth exceeded him in that age.

A dreadful storm came upon this country the year after; for the charter of Massachusetts was vacated in 1684, and amazing confusions followed it. Their government of the church over the world, which had been upheld for fifty years, with a vast deal of labour to themselves, and oppression upon others, was now dissolved; and the measures which they had meted to others were meted to them with a vengeance. Sir Edmond Andros, with his council in 1686, made laws and imposed taxes upon all without any house of representatives; and they declared that as their charter was forfeited, their lands belonged to the king, and each man must come and buy new titles from them, or be turned off from their lands, which should be disposed of to others. And as the officers of the town of Ipswich refused to assess a tax, which was imposed without a house of representatives, and Mr. Wise their minister justified them in it, he and those officers were brought before the court at Boston, where they pleaded Magna Charta, and the laws of England, in their justification. But one of the judges said, "You must not think that the laws of England will follow you to the ends of the earth. Mr. Wise, you have no more privilege left you, than not to be sold for slaves;" and no man of the council contradicted it. And one of them also said, "It is a fundamental point, consented to by all Christian nations, that the first discoverer of a country inhabited by infidels gives right and dominion of that country to the prince in whose service the discoverers were sent." But Massachusetts replied and said, "This is not a Christian, but an unchristian principle."* Yes; and it was as much so when Mr. Williams was banished for testifying against this and other evils.

Mr. Bradstreet was active in banishing Mr. Williams, and he now felt much of these calamities, when the government was dissolved of which he was at the head. Dr. Mather, also, who had done much against the Bap-

* The Revolution in New England vindicated, p. 16. 44.

tists, was now cruelly persecuted by evil men; one of whom forged a letter in his name, which was shown to the king and council in England, and exposed him to reproach and sufferings there. And because he wrote to a friend that he thought one of their oppressors here forged said letter, he was prosecuted for defamation on that account, and though he was acquitted upon trial, yet they attempted to take him up again for it. The supporting of ministers in the country was interrupted, and Episcopal worship was forcibly carried into one of the meeting-houses in Boston. These things were so distressing, that when they heard that King James had published a declaration for liberty of conscience, in 1687, the ministers of Boston proposed with their people to keep a day of thanksgiving for it; but Andros said if they did, he would clap a guard of soldiers at the doors of their meeting-houses, and so prevented it. Upon these multiplied troubles, they concluded to send Dr. Mather their agent to England; but their enemies tried to hinder it, and he privately got away, and sailed to England in the spring of 1688, and thanked the popish King James for his declaration for liberty of conscience to all.

So great a turn was given to his mind, that he then concluded that the parable of the tares of the field required a general toleration about religion; and he said, "For an uppermost party of Christians to punish men in their temporal enjoyments, because in some religious opinions they dissent from them, or with an exclusion from the temporal enjoyments, which would justly belong unto them, is A ROBBERY."* All his life afterwards was agreeable to this belief, though many ministers in our country have been guilty of such robbery ever since. One religious sect have held a power to take away the property of the people for ministers, to the constant injury of dissenters from them.

Dr. Mather had several interviews with King James, till he found him to be so deceitful, that he refrained from any more concern with him, and waited for William to

* His Life, p. 59.

come to the throne. But Andros was so much afraid of it, that he imprisoned the man who first brought his proclamation to Boston; though this alarmed the country so much, that the people flocked in by thousands, April 18, 1689, and confined Andros and his party, until they were sent to England by an order from thence; and the former rulers here were restored to their places, and managed the government till the new charter arrived.

CHAPTER VII.

The world governs the church—But Boston is exempted from it—Plymouth colony was so at first—Great declensions are lamented—But they increase—Episcopal society constituted—They try for an establishment here—Ministers try for a lordly power—They obtain it in Connecticut—Hooker was against it—Norwich and Windsor reject it; and Wise, Moody, and Mather also—But Stoddard was not so—The Baptists are favoured at Boston—Hollis is liberal to Cambridge college.

THE new charter for Massachusetts contained many privileges, though it took away some which they had before. It was dated October 7, 1691, and reserved a power in the crown always to appoint the two chief officers of government; and no law could be made without the consent of the governor, and when that was obtained, the king in council could disannul any law, within three years after it was made. William intended by this to prevent their making any more persecuting laws, and it had that effect fifty years after, when Connecticut imprisoned men for preaching the gospel, but Massachusetts could not do so. Yet other evils were not prevented; and taxing of our trade, and being under kingly governors, finally separated these colonies from Britain. Plymouth colony, on the one hand, and the province of Maine on the other, were now united with Massachusetts.

When the new charter arrived, May 14, 1692, the

country was so involved in confusion about witchcraft, that twenty persons were executed on that account, in about four months. And when their general court met, on October 12, they made laws to compel every town to have and support an orthodox minister, and to empower their county courts to punish every town who neglected it. The whole power of choosing, and of supporting religious ministers was put into the hands of the voters in each town, who acted therein without any religious qualification in themselves. Formerly the church had governed the world, but now the world was to govern the church, about religious ministers. Our Lord says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. And his kingdom evidently here means his church; yet no regard is paid to his authority, as far as the world governs in religious affairs.

Therefore Dr. Mather, and other fathers in Boston, obtained an exemption from these laws, in February, 1693, which Boston has enjoyed ever since. But the country in general is governed by the world, about religious ministers, to this day.* When that first law was made, they did not remember that any town had more than one church in it. But now an act was passed to allow each church to elect her own minister, and then to present him to the voters in the society who met with them for worship; and if they received him, all that society must be compelled to support him. If the selectmen of any town neglected to assess the salary that was ordered for their minister, their county courts were to fine them forty shillings for the first offence, and four pounds for the second. And they attempted to force the town of Swansea to receive a Congregational minister, where there never had been any but Baptist churches, nor ever have to this day. The second church was now formed there.

When they were under the government of Plymouth colony, their ministers were treated as regular ministers,

* The modification of the Bill of Rights in so far altered this arrangement, that the whole of Massachusetts is now in the same situation as Boston in this respect. The "standing order" of clergy is now among "the things that *were*."—J. A. W.

and one of the brethren of the first church in Swansea was elected a magistrate in their government for eleven years together. Neither was a college education held to be essential for a Congregational minister there, as it was in Massachusetts; for Mr. Jonathan Dunham was ordained the pastor of the church at Edgarton in 1694; and Mr. Samuel Fuller, after preaching sixteen years in Middleborough, was ordained pastor of a church that was constituted there in 1694. He was much esteemed as a gospel minister, until he died there, August 24, 1695, aged 66. Mr. Isaac Cushman was invited to succeed him, but he chose to settle at Plymton, where he before had a call; and he was ordained there in 1698, where he was a great blessing for about forty years. Mr. Samuel Arnold was also the first minister in Rochester, where he was long useful; and neither of these were educated at any college. And though Mr. John Cooke was censured by Mr. Reyner at Plymouth a little before he left that church, and robbed them of their records, yet Cooke was a Baptist minister in Dartmouth for many years, from whence spring the Baptist church in the east borders of Tiverton.

The Massachusetts were three years in finding out what to do when a congregation did not concur with their church, in the choice of a pastor; but in May, 1695, they enacted, that in such a case, the church should call a council of three or five churches, and if they approved of the choice of the church, the congregation must submit and support him; if not, then the church must give up her choice, and call another minister; and so they have acted ever since. And it may be serviceable to know what eminent fathers then thought about the state of religion among them.

Mr. Samuel Torry of Weymouth delivered the election sermon at Boston, May 16, 1683, when he said, "There is already a great death upon religion, little more left than a name to live; the things which remain are ready to die, and we are in great danger of dying together with it; this is one of the most awakening and humbling considerations of our present state and condition. O! the many deadly symptoms of death that are upon our religion! Consider

we then how much it is dying respecting the very being of it, by the general failure of the work of CONVERSION; whereby only it is that religion is propagated, continued, and upheld in being among any people. As conversion work doth cease, so religion doth die away; though more insensibly, yet most irrecoverably."* And in 1697, Dr. Increase Mather wrote a dedication of Mitchel's life, in which he said, "Dr. Owen has evinced, that the letting go this principle, that particular churches ought to consist of *regenerate persons*, brought in the great apostasy of the Christian church. The way to prevent the like apostasy in these churches, is to require an account of those who offer themselves to communion therein concerning the work of God on their souls, as well as concerning their knowledge and belief."† Three years after he published another book, which he dedicated to the churches of New England, to whom he said, "If the begun apostasy should proceed as fast the next thirty years, as it has done these last, surely it will come to that in New England, (except the gospel itself depart with the order of it,) that the most conscientious people therein will think themselves concerned to gather churches out of churches." And having clearly proved that Christ has given to his churches the sole right, each of electing her own pastors, he declares it to be "Simonical to affirm that this sacred privilege may be purchased with money."‡ And the next year after this book was published, it was highly recommended by Mr. John Higginson, and Mr. William Hubbard, the two oldest ministers in the government, as may be seen in Wise's works, printed in 1773. Mr. Willard published a book in 1700, in which he says, "It hath been a frequent observation, that if one generation begins to decline, the next that follows usually grows worse, and so on, until God pours out his Spirit again upon them. The decays which we already languish under are sad; and what tokens are on our children, that

* Said Sermon, p. 11.
† Said dedication, p. 16.
‡ Mather on Gospel Order, 1700, p. 12. 67, 68.

it is like to be better hereafter? God be thanked that there are so many among them who promise well; but, alas! how doth vanity, and a fondness after new things abound among them? How do young professors grow weary of the strict profession of their fathers, and become strong disputants for those things which their progenitors forsook a pleasant land for the avoidance of!"*

A new church was formed in Brattle street, Boston, in 1699, with a professed design to receive communicants upon lower terms than their fathers did; and in 1700, Mr. Solomon Stoddard of Northampton published a book in London, wherein he expressly held, that the Christian church is national; and that all baptized persons, who are not openly scandalous, ought to come to the Lord's supper, "though they know themselves to be in a natural condition." And by confounding the work of Jewish and Christian officers together, he asserted that the power of receiving, censuring, and restoring members is wholly in officers, and says, "The brethren of the church are not to intermeddle with it." Again he says, "A national synod is the highest ecclesiastical authority upon earth." Finally he says, "Synods have power to admonish, to excommunicate, and deliver from those censures, and every man must stand to the judgment of the national synod. Deut. xvii. 12."† These indeed were the same principles, which our fathers fled into America to avoid; and this last text is the same which was brought in 1668, to justify their banishing the Baptists.

Episcopalians were also then striving for power over this country. On June 16, 1701, a society was incorporated in England for that purpose, even to propagate what they called the gospel in America. They sent over missionaries, and got so far in about twelve years, as to obtain an order from the crown to bring a bill into Parliament to establish Episcopacy here, and they expected it would speedily be done, when the queen was suddenly

* Christian History, vol. i. p. 101.
† Stoddard on Instituted Churches, p. 12. 21. 29. 33.

taken away by death; and they could not get the two succeeding kings to revive the scheme.*

When the general court met at Boston, October 15, 1702, they made another law to empower each county court, after fining such assessors of towns as did not obey their orders, to appoint others to do it, and then to procure warrants from two justices of the quorum, requiring the constables of delinquent towns and districts to collect such taxes, upon the same penalties as for other taxes; and the fines imposed upon delinquent officers were to go to pay said new assessors for their service. At the same time the ministers through the government were trying for a classical power above all the churches. A number of ministers signed proposals for such a scheme, November 5, 1705, just one hundred years after the gunpowder plot. But Mr. John Wise wrote a sharp answer to these proposals, which prevented their taking place here; though they were soon received in Connecticut; for the third Governor Winthrop died there, November 27, 1707, upon which a special meeting of their general court was called, December 17, to choose a new governor. By a law then in force, he was to be chosen out of a certain number of men in previous nomination; but they broke over this law, and elected an ordained minister for their governor; and he readily quitted the solemn charge of souls for worldly promotion, and was sworn into his new office, January 1, 1708, after which they repealed the law which they had before broken. Mr. Gurdon Saltonstall was the governor so chosen; and he took the proposals of 1705, and presented them to their legislature, where it was observed that there was not one text of Scripture in them. And as this would not do, the proposals were silently withdrawn; and when they met at Hartford, May 13, 1708, an act was passed which said, "This assembly, from their own observation, and from the complaint of others, being made sensible of the defects of the discipline of the churches of this government, arising from the want of a more explicit asserting of the rules given for that end

* Chandler's Appeal in 1767, p. 50—54.

in the Holy Scriptures, from which would arise a firm establishment amongst ourselves, a good and regular issue in cases subject to ecclesiastical discipline, glory to Christ our Head* and edification to his members, hath seen fit to ordain and require, and it is by authority of the same ordained and required, that the ministers of the churches, in the several counties of this government, shall meet together at their respective county towns, with such messengers as the churches to which they belong shall see cause to send with them, on the last Monday in June next, there to consider and agree upon those methods and rules for the management of ecclesiastical discipline, which by them shall be judged agreeable and conformable to the word of God; and shall at the same meeting appoint two or more of their number to be their delegates, who shall all meet together at Saybrook at the next commencement to be held there,† where they shall compare the results of the ministers of the several counties, and out of and from them to draw a form of ecclesiastical discipline," which should be presented to the assembly for their acceptance, and the expense of those meetings was to be paid out of their treasury. This order was obeyed, and a scheme of discipline was drawn up, which was established by law the next month. Their second article says:

"That the churches, which are neighbouring each to other, shall consociate for mutually affording to each other such assistance as may be requisite upon all occasions ecclesiastical;" and they formed two kinds of judicatures for that purpose. The first are consociations, consisting of ministers meeting in their own persons, and the churches by their messengers, of whom each church might send one or two, though the want of them should not invalidate the acts of the council; but none of their acts were valid without the concurrence of the majority of the pastors present. They were to be the standing council in each circuit; though in cases of special difficulty they may call the next consociation to sit and act with them. They are to have one or more consociation

* Can Christ be the head of a worldly government?

† Then the college was there, which is since at New Haven.

in each county. They are to have a new choice of messengers and moderators once a year, or oftener; and the last moderator is to call a new meeting when it is judged proper. Their sentence is to be final and decisive. Their other judicatures are called associations, which are meetings of ministers by themselves in each circuit, as often as they think proper, to hear and answer questions of importance, to examine and license candidates for the ministry, to receive complaints from individuals or societies, and to direct to the calling of the council to try the same, if they think proper; to direct destitute churches in calling and settling pastors, and to make complaint to their legislature against any whom they think negligent of their duty in these things. And each association is to choose one or two delegates, to meet once a year from all parts of their government in a general association.

Their fourth article says, "that according to the common practice of our churches, nothing shall be deemed an act or judgment of any council, which hath not a major part of the elders present concurring, and such a number of the messengers present, as to make the majority of the council." Which is a naked falsehood; for this was so far from being common, that such a practice was never known before in New England. If the major vote of the ministers is necessary in all their acts, to what end are any delegates sent from their churches? Are they not mere ciphers?

Mr. Hooker of Hartford, one of the best ministers who ever came to America, says, "A particular congregation is the highest tribunal, unto which the grieved party may appeal in the third place, if private council, or the witness of two have seemed to proceed too sharply, and with too much rigour against him; before the tribunal of the church, the cause may easily be scanned and sentence executed according to Christ. If difficulties arise in the proceeding, the council of other churches should be sought to clear the truth; but the power of censure rests still in the congregation where Christ placed it." And, speaking of the acts of councils, he says, "They set down their determinations, assure truths in their judg-

ments, and so return them to the particular churches from whence they came; and their determinations take place, not because they concluded so, but because the churches approved of what they have determined; for the churches sent them, and therefore are above them."*

Thus Congregational principles are, that ministers have no right in councils, but as they are sent by each church, and that their judgments are not binding until the church approves of them; but in this new scheme, the ministers attend councils without being sent by their churches, and their judgments are above all their churches. And yet they have the face to call this the common practice of their churches in former times.

Mr. John Woodward was then minister of Norwich, and he got the act of their legislature, which approved of that scheme, and read off the first part of it to his congregation, without the clause which allowed of a dissent from it: but Richard Bushnel and Joseph Backus, Esquires, their representatives, gave them that clause; but he got a major vote to adopt it, upon which said representatives, and other fathers of the town, withdrew from that tyranny, and held worship by themselves for three months. For this the minister and his party censured them, and then sent a letter to their legislature, that Norwich had sent scandalous men for their representatives, who were under church censure, and they were expelled the house. But it was not long before the minister consented to call a council; and they had council after council for about six years. Mr. Stoddard was moderator of one of them, and the governor also came there to try what his influence would do. The last council met there, August 31, 1716, and by their advice he was dismissed, and he quitted the ministry, and went to farming, for which it is likely he was better qualified. The church in Norwich determined to abide by their old principles, and it was well known, that when their church was constituted at Saybrook in 1660, with the approbation of other ministers, Mr. James Fitch was ordained

* Survey of Church Discipline, part 4, p. 19. 47.

their pastor, by the laying on of the hands of their two deacons, as a token that the power of ordination is in each church. They came and planted Norwich the same year, and Mr. Fitch was greatly esteemed as a minister of the gospel for near fifty years. Mr. Timothy Edwards, father of the president, with his church at Windsor, also refused to receive this new scheme. But many ministers in Massachusetts were so fond of it, that they presented a petition to their legislature, in 1715, that they would call a synod to introduce it; and the council voted to grant it, but other branches did not concur. Yet a law was then made, to require each county court to charge the grand jury to prosecute every town or district who neglected to settle or support such ministers as they called orthodox; and if they could not bring them to do it, the court was to make complaint to the legislature, and they were to order such sums to be assessed on delinquent towns as they judged proper, and the ministers were to draw their salaries out of the state treasury. But some others were of a very different mind; for two ministers wrote to Mr. Wise, and desired him to print a second edition of his piece against the said proposals, which they said, "will be a testimony that all our watchmen were not asleep, nor the camp of Christ surprised and taken before they had warning." This was the language of Mr. Samuel Moody of York, and Mr. John White of Gloucester, men of eminent piety and usefulness. Mr. Wise complied with their request. Mr. Backus of Norwich had requested the same, when he went as far as Boston and Ipswich to consult about their affairs, before Norwich minister was dismissed. Dr. Increase Mather also now published a book, in which he said, "For ministers to pretend to a negative voice in synods, or for councils to take upon them to determine what elders or messengers a church shall submit unto, without the choice of the church concerned; or for ministers to pretend to be members of a council without any mission from their churches, nay, although the church declares that they will not send them; is *prelectical*, and essentially differing not only from Congrega-

tional, but from Presbyterian principles. And now that I am going out of the world, I could not die in peace, if I did not discharge my conscience in bearing witness against such innovations, and invasions on the rights and liberties belonging to particular congregations of Christ."*

This was the testimony of the oldest minister then in this province, who had been twice to England, and had been President of Harvard college sixteen years, so that his knowledge must have been very extensive; and yet his testimony was little regarded by many. And the declension of the churches kept pace with the corruption of their ministers; for Mr. Stoddard published a sermon from the twelfth of Exodus, in 1707, wherein he held forth, "that as all persons in Israel who were circumcised were required to eat the passover, so all baptized persons, if they were not scandalous, ought to come to the Lord's supper." And he went so far as to say, "That a minister who knows himself unregenerate may nevertheless lawfully administer baptism and the Lord's supper. Men who are destitute of saving grace, may preach the gospel, and therefore administer and so partake of the Lord's supper. For, says he, the children of God's people should be baptized, who are generally at that time in a natural condition. And the sacrament is a converting ordinance for church members only, and not for other men."† Against this doctrine, Dr. Mather published a dissertation in 1708, wherein he brings the awful case of the man who came in without a wedding garment, and of them who eat and drink the supper unworthily; to avoid which, all are called to examine themselves whether they be in the faith; also that all the churches to whom the apostles wrote were called saints, and faithful brethren in Christ Jesus, and the Lord added to the church such as should be saved; and much more to the same purpose. But as long as he held to infant baptism, Mr. Stoddard was so far from yielding

* Disquisition concerning Councils, 1716, p. 13.
† Said Sermon, p. 13. 27, 28.

to him, that he published a reply in 1709, wherein all his arguments turned upon these points: "That if unsanctified persons might lawfully come to the passover, then such may lawfully come to the Lord's supper; and they who convey to their children a right to baptism, have a right themselves to the Lord's supper, provided they carry inoffensively."* He could plainly see that there was no halfway in the Jewish church; and his opponent could see as plainly that fruits meet for repentance were required in order for baptism, even of those who were in Abraham's covenant. But as tradition had taught them both that the Christian church was built upon that covenant, neither of them could convince the other, though they were two of the most able ministers in the land.

By these things Dr. Mather was brought to treat the Baptists in quite another manner than formerly. Mr. Ellis Callender joined to their church in Boston in 1669, and was a leading member of it in 1680, when their house was nailed up; and he became the pastor of it in 1708. On August 10, 1713, his son Elisha became a member of it, after which he went through Harvard College in Cambridge. Dr. Mather had appeared so friendly to the Baptists, that he and his son, and Mr. John Webb, were called, and assisted in ordaining Mr. Elisha Callender, as pastor of the Baptist church in Boston, May 21, 1718. Dr. Increase Mather wrote a preface to the ordination sermon, in which he said, "It was a grateful surprise to me when several brethren of the Antipædobaptist persuasion came to me, desiring that I would give them the right hand of fellowship in ordaining one whom they had chosen to be their pastor." Dr. Cotton Mather preached the ordination sermon, in which he spake much against cruelties which had often been exercised against dissenters from the ruling powers, both in this and other countries, and then said, "If the brethren in whose house we are now convened, met with any thing too unbrotherly, they with satisfaction hear us expressing our dislike of

* Appeal to the Learned, p. 50. 89.

every thing that looked like persecution in the days that have passed over us."*

Mr. Ellis Callender was a good man in 1680, when the house was nailed up, in which his son was now ordained by the help of a minister, who then had influence in said event. He was then very zealous against those whom he now gave fellowship to; and this may afford a teaching lesson to after ages. Many are earnest in our days to compel all to support Congregational worship, who are far from acting with the sincerity that their fathers did.

From this time the Baptist principles were in more esteem; and Samuel Jennings, Esq. a representative for Sandwich, was baptized by Mr. Elisha Callender, June 9, 1718, and joined to his church, of which he continued a member until he died in 1764. This did not hinder his being elected a representative again, nor of his serving in other offices for his town. And such a revival came on in Swansea, in 1718, as caused the addition of fifty members to the first church there in five years, of which an account was sent to Mr. Thomas Hollis of London, one of the most liberal men upon earth. Dr. Mather had some acquaintance with him, when he was in England thirty years before; and now, hearing of these transactions, his heart was wonderfully enlarged towards our country. Soon after Mr. Callender was ordained, he and his church wrote to friends in London, and a hundred and thirty-five pounds were sent from thence, to enable them to repair their meeting-house. And in 1720, Mr. Hollis sent over so much money as to found a professorship of theology in Harvard College, with a salary of eighty pounds a year to the professor, and ten pounds per annum to ten scholars of good character, four of whom should be Baptists, if any such were there. Also ten pounds a year to the college treasurer, for his trouble, and ten pounds more to supply accidental losses, or to increase the number of students. And in 1726, he founded in that college a professorship of the mathematics and experimental phi-

* Said Sermon, p. 38, 39.

losophy, with a salary of eighty pounds a year to the professor; and he sent over an apparatus for the purpose, which cost about an hundred and fifty pounds sterling, beside large additions to the college library. No man had ever been so liberal to it before, as was this Baptist gentleman.

CHAPTER VIII.

Freetown oppressed—Also Tiverton and Dartmouth—They got relief from England—Increase Mather died—His son tries for more power; but is checked from England—He dies—Pharaoh imitated—Many are imprisoned—Religion revived—Comer converted—He is serviceable in many places—He and others die—Congregational churches at Newport and Providence—A great work at Northampton—Several Baptist churches formed.

EQUAL liberty was then enjoyed in Boston, while other towns were oppressed. In 1718, a law was made to compel all the country to assist in building or repairing Congregational meeting-houses; and in 1719, another attempt was made to force Swansea to receive and support one of their ministers, when they had two Baptist churches and three ministers then in the town, and no other religious society therein. Freetown, on the east side of Swansea, called Mr. Thomas Craghead, a minister from Ireland, to be their pastor, September 9, 1717, and he accepted of their call; but instead of an amicable agreement with them about his support, he went to the court at Bristol in January, 1718, and procured an order from thence to compel Freetown to pay to him a salary of sixty-five pounds a year, to begin from the day he was chosen their minister. And for refusing to pay it, about fourteen of the inhabitants were imprisoned at Bristol, one of whom was a member of a Baptist church in Newport. These things produced much trouble in courts for two or three years, till the minister was forced to leave

the town, and the broils therein lasted for several generations.

Tiverton and Dartmouth were the only remaining towns in the province which had not received any Congregational ministers. Therefore a complaint against them was made to their legislature in May, 1722, and they voted a salary for such ministers, to be assessed upon all the inhabitants of said towns, which the ministers were to draw out of the State treasury. But their assessors sent and obtained an account of how much was added to their tax on that account, and then left it out of their assessment. For this, two assessors of each town were seized in May, 1723, and were imprisoned at Bristol, until they sent to England, and got that act disannulled by the king and council. One of those sufferers was Philip Tabor, pastor of the Baptist church on the borders of Tiverton and Dartmouth. But before the order for their release arrived, two more assessors of Dartmouth were put in prison, for not assessing a like tax imposed for 1723; though upon the arrival of that order, they were released by an act of the legislature here. Yet the ministers were so far from yielding to these things, that they presented a petition to their legislators in May, 1725, that they would call a synod, to give their advice about what were the evils which caused the judgments of Heaven upon the country, and what were the evangelical means which should be used to remove the same, signed by Cotton Mather, in the name of the ministers assembled in their general convention.* But the consideration of this petition was put off to the next meeting of their legislature.

Episcopalians sent an account of it to England, and a sharp reprimand was sent from the British court to Lieutenant Governor Dummer, for giving any countenance thereto, as being an invasion of the king's prerogative, who only could lawfully call synods; and a command to him to cause such a meeting to cease, if it was convened, and to cause the chief actors therein to be punished if they

* Hutchinson, vol. ii. p. 322.

did not immediately disperse. Before this, Dr. Increase Mather died, August 23, 1723, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, having been a preacher of the gospel sixty-five years. We have before seen how he testified against the power which ministers had assumed over the churches; but his son was so fond of it, that when Governor Saltonstall died in 1724, he preached a funeral sermon for him at Boston, and got it printed at New London. And he published a book in 1726, in which he expressed his resentment against Mr. Wise for writing against the proposals of 1705. Having mentioned that four synods had been called by authority in Massachusetts, he says, "The synods of New England know no weapons, but what are *purely spiritual.* They have no secular arms to enforce any canons; they ask none; they want none. And they cannot believe, that any Protestant secular arm would, upon due information, any more forbid their meetings, than they would any of the religious assemblies upheld in the country."* Yet many were banished upon the result of the synod of 1637, and the Baptist meeting-house in Boston was nailed up, after the synod of 1679. Yea, and he was now earnest to have Congregational ministers supported by taxes imposed "in the king's name." He approved of the practice of some towns, who involved the salary for ministers in a general town tax;† and there never was any law made here to exempt the Baptists from taxes to Congregational ministers, until after Dr. Mather died, February 13, 1728, aged 65.

But in May following, an act was made to exempt the persons of Baptists and Quakers from such taxes, if they lived within five miles of their respective meetings, and usually attended worship there on Lord's-days; of which they must give an account to their county courts in June annually, upon oath or affirmation, after which the clerk of each court was to give a list of their names to the assessors of each town or precinct. In this, arbitrary

* An account of the discipline in the churches of New England, p. 172, 173. 184.

† Ibid. p. 21, 22.

power was carried beyond what it was in Egypt; for Pharaoh said, "Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and herds be stayed." Let their polls be exempted, but their estates and faculties taxed, said Massachusetts. Herein they imitated him; but they went beyond him in two other points; for Pharaoh said, "Go not very far away;" but these allowed only five miles, though many of their parishioners must go much further than that to meeting, even to this day; neither did Pharaoh require a list of the people upon oath, as these did.

Yet this small favour was denied to dissenters in Rehoboth for this year; and for refusing to pay a tax to Congregational ministers there, twenty-eight Baptists, two Quakers, and two Episcopalians were seized and imprisoned at Bristol, in March, 1729. Though Governor Burnet and his council gave their opinion in favour of these people, yet they were confined in prison till they or their friends paid the money. In the fall after, an act was passed to exempt their estates as well as persons, yet still under a five mile limitation.

But we will gladly turn to more agreeable things; for although the majority of Congregational ministers were very corrupt, yet some of them were faithful and successful. In the beginning of 1705, such a revival of religion was granted at Taunton, in the county of Bristol, under the ministry of Mr. Samuel Danforth, as turned the minds of most of the inhabitants from vain company and many immoralities, to an earnest attention to religion, and the great concerns of the soul and eternity; and they had something of the same nature at this time in Boston.* In 1721, the Spirit of God was so remarkably poured out upon the inhabitants of Windham in Connecticut, under the ministry of Mr. Samuel Whiting, and such a great change was made, that fourscore persons were added to their communion in about half a year, for which they kept a day of public thanksgiving.† One curious event happened there, which I will mention. The word preached was such a looking-glass to one man, that he seriously

* Christian History, vol. i. p. 108. 112. † Ibid. p. 130—134.

went to Mr. Whiting, and told him he was very sorry that so good a minister as he was should so grossly transgress the divine rule, as to tell him his faults before all the congregation, instead of coming to deal with him privately. The minister smiled, and said he was glad that truth had found him out, for he had no particular thought of him in his sermon.

Norwich, ten miles from Windham, enjoyed much of the like blessing the same year, from whence my pious mother dated her conversion. Boston shared something of the same, when God in judgment remembered mercy for many; for the smallpox came into the town in April, 1721, and prevailed through the year. It appeared to have happy effects upon many minds, while it carried a large number into eternity. One instance of conversion there I shall mention. John Comer was born in Boston, August 1, 1704, and sat under the ministry of the Dr. Mathers. He was put out to learn a trade; but he had such a desire for learning, that by the influence of Dr. Increase Mather, he was taken from it, and put to school in December, 1720. He had serious concern about his soul from time to time, until he had caught that distemper; and he says, "Nothing but the ghostly countenance of death, unprepared for, was before me, and no sight of a reconciled God, nor any sense of the application of the soul-cleansing blood of Christ to my distressed soul. I remained in extreme terror, until November 22, 1721. All the interval of time I spent in looking over the affairs of my soul; and on that day I was taken sick. As soon as it was told me that the distemper appeared, all my fears entirely vanished, and a beam of comfort darted into my soul, and with it satisfaction from those words, 'Thou shalt not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord.' Yea, so great was my satisfaction, that immediately I replied, to my aunt who told me, Then I know I shall not die now; but gave no reason why I said so."

He recovered, and pursued his learning at Cambridge, where he joined to a Congregational church in February, 1723. Ephraim Crafts, his intimate friend, had joined to the Baptist church in Boston just before. This Comer

thought to be a very wrong action, and took the first opportunity he had to try to convince him of it; but after considerable debate, Comer was prevailed with to take Stennett upon baptism, the reading of which gave a great turn to his mind. However, he concluded to be silent about it; and as education was cheapest at New Haven, he went and entered the college there in September, 1723, and continued a member of it until October, 1724; when infirmity of body caused his return to Boston by water; and a terrible storm at sea, with the death of a dear friend just as he arrived, brought eternity so directly before him, as to spoil his plausible excuses for the neglect of baptism. He informs us, that those words of Christ, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels," had such influence upon him, that, after proper labours with those he was previously connected with, he was baptized, and joined to the Baptist church in Boston, January 31, 1725, and concluded to pursue his studies in a private way. In May following, he went to keep school in Swansea, and was soon called to preach the gospel in the first church there; and on May 19, 1726, he was ordained a pastor of the first church in Newport, colleague with elder Peckum.

Mr. Peckum had been pastor of that church sixteen years, but his gifts were small, and he had but seventeen members in his church; though such a blessing was granted on the ministry of Mr. Comer, that thirty-four were added to them in three years. They had no public singing, until he, with a blessing, introduced it; neither had they any church records before he got a book, and collected into it the best accounts that he could get of their former affairs.

As it has been a common thing in all ages, when men have declined from the power of religion, to fix upon some external practice to supply the want of it; so this was now evident among the Baptists in these parts, and upon a very disputable point too. For in the law of Moses, a great variety of washings or bathings were re-

quired, and also the laying on of hands upon the head of their sacrifices, as a token of their sins being laid thereon; and this evidently pointed to laying our sins upon Christ, who bare our sins in his own body on the tree. And those washings were a clear type of the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which God sheds on us abundantly through Christ Jesus our Saviour. All must allow these to be foundation points. And the same word that is rendered baptisms in the sixth chapter to the Hebrews, is rendered washings in the ninth; and divers washings, and carnal ordinances there, refer most certainly to Jewish ceremonies. But the doctrine which was held forth in those washings, and laying on of hands, was evidently the doctrine of the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and of our acceptance with God by having our sins laid upon Christ, who made atonement for them.

But receiving it as a foundation principle in Christianity, that every believer must pass under laying on of hands after baptism, in order to be received into church communion, caused a separation among the Baptists in Newport and Providence in 1652, which still continued in Newport. And as Mr. Comer thought that separation to be wrong, and yet that laying on of hands after baptism was warrantable, he preached it up in that way, on November 17, 1728, without first acquainting his church with his being of this mind. Therefore two of the most powerful members, who disliked his searching preaching, took this as a handle to crowd him out of their church. This was a sore trial to him, but they prevailed to have him dismissed in January, 1729, and he then passed under hands, and was received into the second church in Newport, where he preached one-half of the Lord's-days with elder Daniel Wightman for two years. A revival of religion began in that church a little before, and forty members were added to it in those two years, at the close of which they had one hundred and fifty members, being the largest church in the colony. Governor Jenks then lived in Newport, and communed with that church, who supported Comer liberally. In March, 1731, he went a journey into New Jersey, and as far as Philadelphia, and was

greatly pleased with the faith and order of the Baptist churches in those parts.

Upon his return, receiving an invitation from Rehoboth, he was dismissed from Newport, and removed to Rehoboth in August, where a church was formed, and he was installed their pastor, January 26, 1732. In the mean time, Mr. John Callender from Boston was ordained in the first church in Newport, a colleague with elder Peckum, October 13, 1731. Also Mr. Nicholas Eyres, who came from England to New York, was called to Newport, and was settled as a colleague with elder Wightman the same month.

Mr. Elisha Callender of Boston had been sent for to Springfield, where he baptized seven persons in July, 1727, and Mr. Comer visited them in October following: and was there when the great earthquake came on in the evening of the 29th of that month. After he was settled in Rehoboth, he visited the people in Sutton and Leicester, in June, 1732, and baptized eight persons in those two towns: one of whom was Daniel Denny, Esq., who came from England. The next month he preached in Middleborough, and baptized one man there. In November following, he baptized fifteen at home in one day; and before the close of 1733, his church had increased to ninety-five members, besides many seals of his ministry who joined to other churches. He was a small man, but of sprightly powers both of body and mind, and did much towards the revival of doctrinal and practical religion among the Baptists; and collected many papers, and wrote many things that have been very serviceable in our history. But his constant labours and exertions in this noble cause, wasted his vital strength, and he fell into a consumption, of which he died in Rehoboth, May 23, 1734, before he was thirty years old. Elder Ephraim Wheaton, pastor of the first church in Swansea, died the 26th of April before, aged 75, having two hundred members in his church. These things I have carefully collected from various records and writings.

On September 16, 1735, a Baptist church was formed in Sutton, and September 28, 1737, Benjamin Marsh

and Thomas Green were ordained their joint pastors. But on September 28, 1738, by mutual agreement, the brethren at Leicester became a church by themselves, and Green their pastor. On November 4, 1736, a Baptist church was gathered in Brimfield; and on November 4, 1741, Ebenezer Moulton was ordained their pastor. March 24, 1738, a century after the deed of Rhode Island was obtained of the Narraganset Indians, Mr. John Callender delivered a sermon at Newport, which he published with enlargements, containing the best history of that colony then extant. But his uncle at Boston was taken away by death the last day of that month; and he finished his course in the happy manner following: March 21, he said, "When I look on one hand, I see nothing but sin, guilt, and discouragement; but when I look on the other, I see my glorious Saviour, and the merits of his precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin. I cannot say I have such transports of joy as some have had, but through grace I can say I have gotten the victory over death and the grave." Being asked what word of advice he had for his church, he earnestly replied, "Away with lukewarmness! Away with such remissness in attending the house of prayer, which has been a discouragement to me, and I have been faulty myself." The Boston Evening Post of April 3, says, "Friday morning last, after a lingering sickness, deceased the Reverend Mr. Elisha Callender, minister of the Baptist church in this town; a gentleman universally beloved by people of all persuasions, for his charitable and catholic way of thinking. His life was unspotted, and his conversation always affable, religious, and truly manly. During his long illness he was remarkably patient, and in his last hours (like the blessed above) pacific and entirely serene; his senses good to the last. *I shall*, said he, *sleep in Jesus*, and that moment expired."

Mr. Comer gives us an account of the first planting of the Congregational churches in Rhode Island colony. Mr. Nathanael Clap from Dorchester began to preach in Newport in 1695, and continued his labours there, under many discouragements, until a church was formed, and he was

ordained their pastor, November 3, 1720. But in 1727, one Mr. John Adams, a young minister, came and preached there; and because Mr. Clap would not consent to have him settled as his colleague, a party council from Massachusetts divided the church, and Adams was ordained over a majority of the church, April 11, 1728; and Mr. Clap was shut out of his meeting-house, and his people built another for him. But in about two years, Adams's people dismissed him without a recommendation. Congregational ministers also took much pains to introduce their worship into Providence; to promote which, an association of ministers, in and near Boston, wrote to Governor Jenks, and other men of note in that town, October 27, 1721, and said, "With what peace and love societies of different modes of worship have generally entertained one another in your government, we cannot think of it without admiration; and we suppose, under God, it is owing to the choice liberty granted to Protestants of all persuasions, in the royal charter graciously given you; and to the wise and prudent conduct of the gentlemen that have been governors and justices in your colony." And so went on to desire them to countenance and encourage the preaching of their ministers among them. The town of Providence wrote an answer to them, February 23, 1722, signed by Jonathan Sprague, wherein they say, "This happiness principally consists in their not allowing societies any superiority one over another; but each society supports their own ministry, of their own free-will, and not by constraint or force, upon any man's person or estate; and this greatly adds to our peace and tranquillity. But the contrary, that takes any man's estate by force, to maintain their own or any other ministry, it serves for nothing but to provoke to wrath, envy, and strife." And they went on to mention how such things were continued in their government.

An anonymous reply to this was published the fall after, which contained a mean reflection against Sprague's character, without any thing that could vindicate their own conduct. In January, 1723, Sprague wrote a brief vindication of his character, and then said, "Why do you

strive to persuade the rising generation, that you never persecuted nor hurt the Baptists? Did you not barbarously scourge Mr. Obadiah Holmes, and imprison John Hazel of Rehoboth, who died and came not home? And did you not barbarously scourge Mr. Baker, in Cambridge, the chief mate of a London ship? Where also you imprisoned Mr. Thomas Gould, John Russell, Benjamin Sweetser, and many others, and fined them fifty pounds a man. And did you not take away a part of said Sweetser's land, to pay his fine, and conveyed it to Solomon Phips, the Deputy-governor Danforth's son-in-law, who after by the hand of God ran distracted, dying suddenly, saying he was bewitched? And did you not nail up the Baptist meeting-house doors, and fine Mr. John Miles, Mr. James Brown, and Mr. Nicholas Tanner? Surely I can fill sheets of paper with the sufferings of the Baptists, as well as others, within your precincts; but what I have mentioned shall suffice for the present." Mr. Sprague was a minister for many years to a Baptist society, in the east part of Smithfield, then a part of Providence, where he died in January, 1741, aged 93. Mr. Comer knew him, and speaks of him as a very judicious and pious man.

A Congregational church was constituted in Providence, and Mr. Josiah Cotton was ordained their pastor, October 23, 1728. The year before, on October 29, 1727, about ten in the evening, came on the greatest earthquake that had then been known in this country, and great numbers were awakened thereby, in all parts of the land, many of whom appeared to be truly turned to God, though others soon forgot their danger. But greater things are before us, as to real reformation, and one instrument of it deserves particular notice; namely, Mr. Jonathan Edwards, who was born at Windsor in Connecticut, October 5, 1703; was educated at Yale College, and began to preach the gospel in 1722, and was ordained at Northampton, colleague with his grandfather Stoddard, February 15, 1727. Mr. Stoddard died February 11, 1729, after having preached there about sixty years. He preached the clear doctrines of grace, and had great success in his ministry, notwithstanding his opinion about

terms of communion and church government, before described.

It was a low time among them for several years, until a revival of religion began in Northampton, in 1733, and it arose so high in the spring of 1735, that Mr. Edwards entertained hopes that about thirty were converted in a week, for six weeks together; so that scarce a grown person in the place remained unaffected, and many children were effectually called. The same work was powerful in about twelve adjacent towns in the county of Hampshire, and they had something of it in various parts of Connecticut. Mr. Edwards wrote a narrative of this great work, in 1736, which was printed in England as well as America, and caused great joy to many; though it was but as dropping, before a plentiful shower, as will appear in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

The low state of religion in our land—But a glorious revival was now granted; and it spread far—Yet laws were made against it in Connecticut, and writings against it in Massachusetts, though inconsistent—Ministers are punished by the general court of Connecticut—Some make retractions—But President Edwards condemns opposers.

The first fathers of New England held, that each believer stands in the same relation to his children as Abraham did to his, in the covenant of circumcision; and therefore that each believer had a right to bring his children to baptism, which no others had. But forty years after, a door was opened for those who had been baptized in infancy, and were not scandalous, to bring their infants to baptism, though none were to come to the ordinance of the supper without a profession of saving grace. Yet in forty years more, an open plea was published, before described, for all baptized persons who were not openly

scandalous, to come to the Lord's supper, as well as to bring their children to baptism. And in a third forty years, these things had turned the world into the church, and the church into the world, in such a manner as to leave very little difference between them. But as it is said of false teachers, "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them," so it was generally in our land. 1 John iv. 5. And in England the declension had gone so far, that in 1736, Bishop Butler said, "It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."*

But when the enemy was thus coming in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him. Mr. George Whitefield, who was born in the city of Gloucester, December 16, 1714, converted while in the University of Oxford in 1733, and ordained in 1736, was wonderfully furnished with grace and gifts to proclaim doctrinal and practical Christianity through the British empire. He sailed from England in December, 1737, to Georgia, and returned through Ireland to England in December, 1738. He embarked again for America in August, 1739, and travelled and laboured with great success, as far northward as New York. He returned back to Georgia, from whence he went to South Carolina, and sailed from thence to New England, where he had been earnestly invited, and landed at Newport, September 14, 1740, and preached there three days, from whence he came to Boston the 18th. After preaching there and near it many days, he went as far eastward as Old York, to see our excellent Moody; and then he returned and preached at Boston till October 12, after which he went

* Preface to his Analogy.

up westward to Northampton, to see Mr. Edwards, and roused the people there; he then turned down by Hartford and New Haven, and away to New York, through New Jersey and Philadelphia, and embarked from Delaware Bay, December 1, 1740. And he then said, "O! my soul, look back with gratitude on what the Lord hath done for thee in this excursion. I think it is the seventy-fifth day since I arrived at Rhode Island. My body was then weak, but the Lord has much renewed its strength. I have been enabled to preach, I think, one hundred and seventy-five times in public, besides exhorting frequently in private. I have travelled upwards of eight hundred miles, and gotten upwards of seven hundred pounds sterling, in goods, provisions, and money, for the Georgia orphans. Never did God vouchsafe to me greater comforts. Never did I see such a continuance of the Divine presence in the congregations to whom I have preached."*

When he went through New Jersey, he prevailed with Mr. Gilbert Tennant to take a tour into this field, which was white already unto the harvest; and he came to Boston in December, and laboured in these parts till March, when he came round by Plymouth, Middleborough, Bridgwater, Taunton, Newport, and Providence, and so returned home through Connecticut. Both of them, in their preaching, laid open the dreadful danger of hypocrisy, as well as profaneness, and spake as plainly against unconverted ministers and professors as any other sort of sinners, and the effects were exceeding great and happy.

Some indeed tried to persuade the world, that the great change then made in the land, was chiefly owing to the mechanical influence of their terrible words, gestures, and moving ways of address. But Mr. Prince says, "As to Mr. Whitefield's preaching, it was in the manner, moving, winning, and melting; but the mechanical influence of this, according to the usual operation of mechanical powers, in two or three days expired, with many

* Collection of his Journals, p. 437.

in two or three hours; and I believe with the most as soon as the sound was over, or they got out of the house, or in the first conversation they fell into. But with the *manner* of his preaching, wherein he appeared to be *in earnest*, he delivered those *vital truths* which animated all our martyrs, made them triumph in flames, and led his hearers into the view of that vital, inward, active piety, which is the mere effect of the mighty and supernatural operation of a DIVINE POWER on the souls of men; which only will support and carry through the sharpest trials, and make meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." As to Mr. Tennant, he says, "In private converse with him I found him to be a man of considerable parts and learning; free, gentle, condescending; and from his own various experience, reading the most noted writers on experimental divinity, as well as the Scriptures, and conversing with many who had been awakened by his ministry in New Jersey, where he then lived; he seemed to have as deep an acquaintance with the experimental part of religion as any I have conversed with, and his preaching was as searching and rousing as ever I heard. He seemed to have no regard to please the eyes of his hearers with agreeable gestures, nor their ears with delivery, nor their fancy with language; but to aim directly at their hearts and consciences, to lay open their ruinous delusions, show them their numerous, secret, hypocritical shifts in religion, and drive them out of every deceitful refuge, wherein they made themselves easy with a form of godliness without the power."*

Religion was much revived at Boston, Northampton, and other places in the fall and winter; and in the two years following, the work spread through most parts of New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, beyond all that was ever known before in America. Several ministers, who were converted before, were now greatly quickened, and spent much of their time in travelling and preaching in various parts of the land. Others, who had been blind guides before, were now

* Christian History, vol. ii. p. 384—387.

spiritually enlightened, and heartily joined in this great work; three of them were Mr. William Hobby of Reading, Mr. John Porter of Bridgwater, and Mr. Daniel Rogers, a tutor in Harvard College, who all acknowledged Mr. Whitefield to be the instrument of their conversion. A number of young scholars also met with a change in these times, and came into the ministry, in which they did much for the good of souls. Religious meetings, and religious conversation, engaged the attention of a great part of the people in most parts of the land. A reformation of life, confessing their former faults, and making restitution for injuries done, were evident in many places; and a vast number of all ages made a profession of religion, and joined to the several churches where they lived.

But a great majority of the ministers and rulers through the land disliked this work, and exerted all their powers against it; and as many imperfections appeared therein, this gave them many plausible excuses for so doing. But Mr. Edwards delivered a sermon at New Haven in September, 1741, in which he well distinguished between the marks of a true work of God, and all false appearances of it, which was printed and spread through the nation, and was much esteemed. An anonymous answer to it was soon published at Boston, and many appeared against the work in Massachusetts; but they could not get any law made against it, as they did in Connecticut.

Governor Talcot died there in October, 1741, while their legislature was sitting, who then elected another governor, who was greatly in favour of ministerial power; and they called a consociation of ministers to meet at Guilford in November, and they drew up a number of resolves, in one of which they said, "That for a minister to enter into another minister's parish, and preach or administer the seals of the covenant, without the consent of, or in opposition to the settled minister of the parish, is *disorderly*." Mr. Robbins of Branford had done something like it before at New Haven, for which others had reproved him, and he had made some concessions to them. In December he received a letter from a Baptist minister

in Wallingford, informing him that Dr. Bellamy had preached to their society to mutual satisfaction, and desiring that he would do the like. This request appeared agreeable, and he appointed a meeting for this purpose, January 6, 1742. But two days before that time, a deacon from Wallingford brought him a letter signed by forty-two men in their town, and another signed by two ministers who lived by the way, desiring him not to go to preach to those Baptists, without giving any reason against it, but their desire. And as this did not appear to him a sufficient reason to violate his promise, and to disappoint a people who were desirous to hear the gospel, he went and preached two sermons to them. Yet for this he was complained of as a *disorderly* person, to the consociation of New Haven county, February 9. He asked how it could be disorderly, since he preached to a particular religious society, at the request of their pastor. They answered, that it was not a lawful society, but a disorderly company. He replied, that Governor Talcot had advised Wallingford collectors not to distrain ministerial taxes from them; and the authority sent them annual proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings, as to other societies.* But they disregarded these reasons, and expelled him out of their consociation! This was about the time that Mr. David Brainerd was expelled out of Yale college, who did the most afterwards towards spreading Christianity among the Indians of any man in our day. How far were the above actions from a catholic behaviour towards the Baptists, pretended to by many!

Those ministers procured a law to be made in May, 1742, wherein it was enacted, that if any settled minister in their government should preach in the parish of another without his consent, he should lose all the benefit of their laws for his support; and that if any man who was not a settled minister, should go into any parish and preach without such consent, he should be imprisoned until he gave an hundred pound bond not to do so again;

* That Baptist church in Wallingford was formed, and Mr. John Merriman was ordained their pastor in 1739.

and if any minister came out of any other government, and preached without such consent, he should be taken up by authority, and carried as a vagrant person out of Connecticut. At the same time they had an old law, by which every person was to be fined ten shillings, who drew off from parish ministers, and met for worship in a place separate from them. What tyranny was this! And though Massachusetts had no power to make such laws about preachers, yet said Connecticut law was printed in a Boston newspaper, and many did all they could against travelling ministers, and against the work in general.

But Mr. Edwards published a book on the other side, in 1742; showing that the work then going on in the land was a glorious work of God; the duty of all to acknowledge and to promote it, and the great danger of the contrary; wherein its friends had been injuriously blamed; what ought to be corrected among them, and what ought positively to be done to promote the work. This book was much esteemed in Europe as well as America. Yet Dr. Charles Chauncy of Boston was so much displeased with it, that he set off and travelled through the country, as far as Philadelphia, picking up all the evils that he could find, and some reports that were not true, concerning the work, and published them in 1743, as an answer to Edwards. In an introduction of above thirty pages, he tries to prove that this work was carried on by the same spirit and errors that were condemned by the synod of 1637. But what has been before recited, and much more that might be produced, plainly shows the contrary. He then spends about three hundred pages upon what he calls, "things of a bad and dangerous tendency, in the late religious appearances in New England." And the first thing which he so calls, is itinerant preaching, which he says had its rise in these parts from Mr. Whitefield, who was followed by Mr. Tennant, and others. And before he cited any Scripture against it, he mentioned their law against it in Connecticut, which he observed had been printed in one of the Boston papers. After which he produced what is said in the Scriptures concerning idle disorderly walkers, who eat the bread of

others for naught. 2 Thess. iii. 6—11. And then he mentioned the caution against being busybodies in other men's matters. 1 Pet. iv. 15. But this could not answer his turn, without mending the translation, and observing that the word busybody is *episcopos*, which is often translated bishop; and the evil here warned against, he says, is "One that plays the bishop in another's diocess."* But it is well known, that the word means an overseer, and is so rendered in Acts xx. 28. A busybody then is an overseer in the affairs of others, and in the two scriptures which he produced, it is applied to Christians in general, and is not confined to ministers. All should take heed that they do not intermeddle with the affairs of others, which do not belong to them. Two other scriptures he brings which belong to ministers, that condemn the commending of themselves, and entering into the line of others, and the building upon another man's foundation. 2 Cor. x. 12—17. Rom. xv. 20. And these are his scriptures to prove that a minister ought not to preach in any parish where another was settled by the laws of men, without his consent.† But all ought to know, that the line of conduct which God has drawn in his word, and the foundation which he has laid for his church, is as high above all establishments for worship by human laws, as heaven is above the earth. And the reader will judge whether the above application of those scriptures to worldly establishments, is not corrupting the word of God. For travelling preachers of the gospel through the world, were the great means that God made use of, to lay the foundation of the Christian church, in the apostolic age. And travelling preaching hath often been blessed for the good of souls in every age, and in every country where the gospel has come.

Another thing which Dr. Chauncy complains of, as of a dangerous tendency, is a spirit of rash and censorious judging; this he says first appeared in Mr. Whitefield, who seldom preached, but he had something or other in

* Chauncy's Thoughts, p. 36—42.
† P. 43—45.

his sermon against unconverted ministers. Chauncy says, "I freely confess, had the ministers of New England lost their character as men of religion, by a deportment of themselves contradictory to the gospel, I should have found no fault with any representation of them as bad men; nay, dangerous enemies to the kingdom of Christ: for I am clearly of the mind, that a visibly wicked minister is the greatest scandal to religion, and plague to the church of God; nor is it a hurt, but a real service to the cause of Christ, to expose the characters of such, and lessen their power to do mischief."* But to prove that their character was good, he recites the words of Dr. Cotton Mather, who said, "No man becomes a minister in our churches, till he first be a communicant; and no man becomes a communicant, until he hath been severely examined about his *regeneration*, as well as his conversation."†

But when was it so? This testimony was published in 1696; but four years after Mr. Stoddard published his opinion, that if men were not openly scandalous, they ought to come to communion in the church, though they knew themselves to be unregenerate; and this opinion had spread over the whole country before Mr. Whitefield came into it. Nay, Dr. Chauncy himself said afterwards, "The divinely appointed way, in which persons become members of the visible church of Christ, is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that, in order to their being so, they must be subjects of *saving faith*, or judged to be so."‡ So that out of his own mouth he is condemned.

An uncharitable and censorious spirit is ever to be watched against, much of which appeared in that day among all orders of men. And Dr. Chauncy discovered a large share of it, and he published many censures of others, and of some in high authority. Governor Law of Connecticut, in a proclamation for their annual fast, February 16, 1743, called all his subjects to confess and be hum-

* P. 140, 141. † P. 142.
‡ Sermons on breaking of bread, p. 106.

bled for their sins, which he said were, "The great neglect and contempt of the gospel and the ministry thereof, and the prevailing of a spirit of error, disorder, unpeaceableness, pride, bitterness, uncharitableness, censoriousness, disobedience, calumniating and reviling of authority; divisions, contentions, separations, and confusions in churches; injustice, idleness, evil-speaking, lasciviousness, and all other vices and impieties which abound among us." This Chauncy has inserted in his book.* This proclamation was published so early as to have influence in their election of rulers; and Deacon Hezekiah Huntington of Norwich, who had been one of their council three years, was then left out of it, and a man was elected in his room, who had sent men to prison for preaching and exhorting the year before. Huntington had been greatly engaged in the reformation then going on in the land, and he continued steadfast therein all his days.

A new church had been formed in New Haven, and another at Milford, which had been tolerated by their county court, and they had put themselves under the care of a presbytery in New Jersey. But the legislature that met at Hartford in May, 1743, enacted, "That those commonly called Presbyterians or Congregationalists shall not take benefit of the act of toleration." And they also declared that no other dissenters from the established way of worship, but such as should "Before the Assembly take the oaths and subscribe the declaration provided in the act of Parliament, in cases of like nature, should be tolerated." Mr. John Owen of Groton, was complained of for preaching against their laws in April before; therefore he was ordered to be brought before the legislature at their next session.

In the mean time a Presbyterian minister was sent from the Jerseys, to preach to said societies in Milford and New Haven; and for preaching at Milford, he was taken up by authority, and carried as a vagrant person out of their government. But when he was let go, he came

* His Thoughts, p. 295, 296.

back and preached at New Haven. And as the people concealed him on week-days, an officer came on a Lord's-day morning and seized him at their meeting-house door, and carried him away. Yet he returned again and preached to the people; an account of which was laid before their legislature in October following, when it was enacted, that any minister who should do so again, should be imprisoned until he should give a hundred pound bond not to do so any more. Such was their treatment of a minister of Christ, whose name and title since was Samuel Finley, D. D. President of New Jersey College.

As Mr. Owen avoided being taken, and like complaints were exhibited against Mr. Pomroy, both were ordered to be brought before the assembly the next May. Accordingly, at their meeting at Hartford, May 10, 1744, Owen came with an humble confession, and they forgave him, he paying costs. Pomroy was brought, and stood trial for some hours; but he was condemned, and ordered to be committed, till he would pay costs, and bind himself for one year, in a recognizance of fifty pounds, not to offend again in like manner. He then yielded to their requirements. And Mr. James Devenport, who had gone as far in condemning the settled ministers, and in promoting separations from them, as any minister in these parts, wrote a retraction of those things, and sent it to Boston, where Mr. Prince published it, in September, 1744.* After which, scarce any settled minister in New England ventured to preach in any parish, without the consent of the settled minister.

Yet Mr. Edwards had before said, "If ministers preach never so good doctrine, and are never so painful and laborious in their work, yet if, at such a day as this, they shew to the people that they are not well affected to this work, but are very doubtful and suspicious of it, they will be very likely to do their people a great deal more hurt than good: for the very fame of such a great and extraordinary work of God, if their people were suffered to believe it to be his, and the example of other towns,

* Christian History, vol. ii. p. 237—240.

together with what preaching they might hear occasionally, would be likely to have a much greater influence upon the minds of the people, to awaken and animate them in religion, than all their labours with them. And we that are ministers, by looking on this work from year to year, with a displeased countenance, shall effectually keep the sheep from their pasture, instead of doing the part of shepherds to them, by feeding them; and our people had a great deal better be without any settled minister at all, at such a day as this. The times of Christ's remarkably appearing in behalf of his church, and to revive religion, and advance his kingdom in the world, are often spoken of in the prophecies of Scripture, as times wherein he will remarkably execute judgment on such ministers or shepherds as do not feed the flock, but hinder their being fed, and so deliver his flock from them, as Jer. xxiii. Ezek. xxxiv. Zech. x. Isa. xlvi. &c."* How solemn are these considerations! And we have before seen, that Dr. Increase Mather, in the year 1700, said, "If the began apostasy should proceed as fast the next thirty years as it has done these last, surely it will come to that in New England, that the most conscientious people therein will think themselves concerned to gather churches out of churches." And though he knew not the exact time, yet this came to pass in forty-five years in the following manner.

CHAPTER X.

Of Canterbury separation—Association letter against it—But separations multiply, though persecuted—The work at Middleborough—Of President Edwards—Of Mr. Whitefield—Robbins persecuted, but delivered—Sufferings at Norwich and Canterbury.

Mr. Elisha Paine was born in Eastham, on Cape Cod, and was well instructed in the principles of the

* Edwards' Thoughts, 1742, p. 133—136.

first church in Plymouth, and was well established therein. His father removed his family to Canterbury, in Connecticut, and was one of the men who formed a church there in 1711. He had four sons, whom he brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and they appeared to be acquainted with experimental religion. His son Elisha was become one of the greatest lawyers in Connecticut, and was much prospered in the world, before the law was made in 1742, to imprison men for preaching the gospel; but he then quitted their courts, and went forth preaching the gospel through the land. The church in Canterbury was then without a pastor; and on January 27, 1743, they voted to adhere to the Cambridge platform instead of that of Saybrook. Soon after, Mr. Elisha Paine set off in preaching the gospel to the northward; but for preaching in Woodstock, which then belonged to Massachusetts, he was taken up, in February, and was sent to Worcester jail, under pretence of his breaking a law against mocking or mimicking of preaching. But four ministers in Connecticut, being informed of it, gave a certificate, that they esteemed him to be qualified to preach the gospel. In May the court at Worcester were forced to release him, as having been imprisoned without law; and he went round preaching the gospel for about a fortnight, and then returned home. On July 8, he set off again, and travelled to Providence, Bristol, Boston, Cambridge, and as far northward as Dunstable and Lancaster, preaching with great power. He returned home December 3, having preached two hundred and forty-four sermons, as appears by his journal. In June, 1744, he went and preached at Eastham and Harwich, which caused a separation, and then a Baptist church in Harwich. Upon his return to Canterbury, a division took place there in the following manner: The parish had called a young minister to preach to them, by whom most of the church were not edified. The parish therefore called a committee of their association in August to give advice in the case. Mr. Paine was requested to give them his objections against said candidate; but he would not, because they

were not called by the church. Another member gave them a copy of the vote of the church against him, which they called the act of the aggrieved *part* of the church; and they advised the parish to go on and settle said candidate. For this, Mr. Paine wrote to one of those ministers in September a sharp reproof for wronging the truth in calling that a part of the church, which was the church itself. Upon this he was seized and imprisoned at Windham before the month was out, for preaching in Windham the spring before, without the consent of parish ministers. Mr. Paine gave bonds to the jail-keeper, so as to have liberty to preach in the yard; and he soon had so large a congregation to hear him, that his persecutors found they weakened their own cause by confining him there. They therefore released him about October 19.

In the mean time, as the church in Canterbury had no other way to avoid hearing a man who did not edify them, they withdrew from their meeting-house, and met at another house. And John and Ebenezer Cleaveland, members of it, as they also were of Yale College; being at home in vacation time, met for worship with their own church; but for nothing but so doing they were expelled from the college. And Mr. Paine was repeatedly cited to appear before the ministers of that county, to answer to complaints they had received against him; but he knew them too well to submit himself to their power. Twelve of them met in November, and published a testimony against him in a newspaper. And near all the ministers in Windham county met and published a letter to their people, dated December 11, 1744, signed by Joseph Coite, Ebenezer Williams, Joseph Meacham, Samuel Dorrance, Solomon Williams, Jacob Eliot, Marston Cabot, Samuel Mosely, Ephraim Avery, Ebenezer Devotion, Eleazar Wheelock, Abel Stiles, Stephen White, John Bass, Richard Salter, William Throope. They brought Deut. xiii. 1—3, as a warning to their people against hearing Mr. Paine and his brethren, and then said, "The case here supposed is an attempt to draw the people to idolatry, and this, you will say, is not

your case. These prophets and dreamers endeavour to draw you to Christ, and not from him; but then they endeavour to draw you from his institutions, to a way of worship which he has not instituted. Though the case is not so strong, yet the argument against your compliance is the same; for whatsoever worship God has not instituted and directed in his word, is false worship, and therefore if there seem to be never so many appearances of God's power attending it, you may not go after it, any more than after a false god."*

Upon which we may observe, that Christ calls the field the world, and says of the wheat and tares, "Let both grow together until the harvest." But he says to his church, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Yet these ministers held the field to be the church, and that Christ would not let his servants root up the tares, "even when they *appeared*."† But how far is such worship from the instituted church of Christ! Yea, while they were for having the tares grow in the church, they would not let the children of God grow peaceably in the world, but took up and imprisoned many of them.

On November 27, 1744, the church of Canterbury met, and sixteen members against twenty-three voted to send for their consociation to come and ordain the candidate whom the parish had chosen; and they met there for that purpose on December 26; but not having the majority of the church for him, they could not proceed according to their own laws. At length they called the parish together, and got them to vote, that they were willing their legislature should set off those who did not choose their candidate, as a distinct religious society; and so went on and ordained him as the minister of that parish. But as the church did not desire any new incorporation by the laws of men, but only petitioned to be exempted from taxes to a minister they never chose, their petition was disregarded, their goods were torn away, or their persons imprisoned for his support for fifteen years, without the least compassion from the ministers who acted in that ordination.

* Association letter, p. 43 † P. 21.

These, and many other things, moved a number of teachers and brethren to meet at Mansfield, October 9, 1745, and form a new church; and they elected Mr. Thomas Marsh of Windham to be their pastor, and appointed his ordination to be on January 6, 1746. But he was seized the day before, and was imprisoned at Windham, for preaching without leave from parish ministers. On the day he was to have been ordained, a large assembly met, to whom Mr. Elisha Paine preached a good sermon, at the close of which about thirteen parish ministers came up, and tried all their influence to scatter that flock, whose shepherd had been smitten; though, instead of it, they elected and ordained Mr. John Hovey as their pastor the next month. Mr. Marsh was confined in prison till June, and then their court released him, and in July he was ordained as a colleague with Mr. Hovey; and many such churches were soon after formed and organized.*

What our Lord says about putting a piece of new cloth into an old garment, and new wine into old bottles, was

* Mr. Solomon Paine was ordained at Canterbury, September 10; Thomas Stevens at Plainfield, September 11; Thomas Dennison at Norwich farms, October 29; Jedidiah Hide at Norwich town, October 30; *Matthew Smith* at Stonington, December 10; John Fuller at Lyme, December 25; Joseph Snow at Providence, February 12, 1747; Samuel Wadsworth at Killingly, June 3; Paul Park at Preston, July 15; *Elihu Marsh*, at Windham, October 7; Ebenezer Frothingham at Weathersfield, October 28; Nathanael Shepard in Attleborough, January 20, 1748; *Isaac Backus* at Bridgwater, April 13; John Paine at Rehoboth, August 3; *William Carpenter* at Norton, September 7; *John Blunt* at Sturbridge, September 28; *Ebenezer Mack* at Lyme, January 12, 1749; Joshua Nickerson at Harwich, February 23; Samuel Hide at Bridgwater, May 11; John Palmer at Windham, May 17; *Samuel Hovey* at Mendon, May 31; Samuel Drown at Coventry, October 11; Stephen Babcock at Westerly, April 4, 1750; *Joseph Hastings* at Suffield, April 17; Nathanael Ewer at Barnstable, May 10; Joshua Morse at New London, May 17; Jonathan Hide at Brookline, January 17, 1751; Ezekiel Cole at Sutton, January 31; Ebenezer Wadsworth at Grafton, March 20; Shubael Stearns at Tolland, March 20; Nathanael Draper at Cambridge, April 24; Peter Werden at Warwick, May 17, &c.

Those in *Italic* became Baptists afterwards; Drown, Babcock, Morse, Stearns, Draper, and Werden were so before.

remarkably verified at this time. Great numbers of young converts had joined to their old churches; but a regard to the pure laws of Christ, from the new wine of love to God and love to men, could not be contained in churches which were governed by the laws and inventions of men, obeyed from the love of worldly honour and gain, or a desire to get life by their own doing, any more than a piece of new cloth could agree with an old garment, or new wine could be contained in old bottles. Instead of it, the rent was made worse, or the bottles were broken.

The consociation of Windham county met in January, 1747, and received accounts of these transactions, and then adjourned a month, and sent citations to Mr. Paine, and others of those ministers, to appear before the lawful ministers of their parishes, or a committee of their council, to offer what they had to say in vindication of themselves. But they were far from an inclination to submit themselves to such judges. When said consociation met again, they published a copy of the confession of faith and covenant of the new church in Mansfield, and their objections against the same, and their judgment against all those new churches, and got these things printed at Boston, in a pamphlet of twenty-two octavo pages. To these means were added the imprisonment of Mr. Frothingham five months, Mr. John Paine eleven months, and Mr. Palmer four months, all at Hartford, for preaching without the consent of parish ministers. Mr. Solomon Paine suffered imprisonment also at Windham for a fortnight, on the same account, and many others suffered the like. And three gentlemen, only for being members and deacons in these separate churches, were, at different times, expelled out of their legislature, namely, Captain Obadiah Johnson, of Canterbury, Captain Thomas Stevens, of Plainfield, and Captain Nathan Jewet, of Lyme. But overstraining their power weakened it, and it began to decline; for Deacon Hezekiah Huntington was again elected into their council at Hartford in May, 1748; and he continued in that office, and was also judge of probate, and chief judge of their county court, until he died in

1773. These things were done in Connecticut; but we must now return to the affairs of Massachusetts.

Mr. Peter Thatcher was the third minister of Middleborough, where he began to preach in 1707, and he was much engaged in that work, especially in and after the glorious year 1741; and his success was so great that there were above three hundred and forty communicants in his church when he died, April 22, 1744.* But the parish committee, directly after his death, exerted all their influence against the church, about calling another minister. And when the church had voted to hear Mr. Sylvanus Conant four Sabbaths upon probation, the parish committee went and got another man to preach there the same days; so that the church withdrew, and met at another place till his probation time was out, and then elected him for their pastor, and presented their choice to the parish. Upon this, said committee made a new regulation of voters, wherein they excluded seven or eight old voters, and made about nineteen new ones; and they negatived the choice of the church. But the church sent for a council of five other churches to settle the matter; and by their help Mr. Conant was ordained their pastor, March 28, 1745. Yet less than a quarter of the church called themselves the standing part of it, and went on and ordained another minister the next October, and held the old house and ministerial land, and taxed all the parish for his support. The church built another meeting-house, and went on to support their minister; but such a party spirit prevailed, even in their legislature, that they could get no relief from thence in about four years. Though such a turn was then made, that the parish was divided into two promiscuously, and each man had liberty to choose which he would be of, and each was to support his own minister. When this liberty was obtained, the opposing party were soon sick of the minister they had ordained, and used violence against him until they got him away, and obtained a dissolution of their society. Does not this, as well as the experience of Canterbury,

* Christian History, vol. ii. p. 77—79. 99.

show the great evil of allowing the world to govern the church about religious ministers?

And where church and world are one, it is no better, as now appeared at Northampton. The excellent Mr. Edwards was settled there, with his grandfather Stoddard, upon the opinion that the Lord's supper was a converting ordinance, and he had gone on fifteen years in that way, until he was fully convinced that it was contrary to the word of God; and he also found that gospel discipline could not be practised in such a way. No sooner was his change of mind discovered, in 1744, than most of his people were inflamed against him, and never would give him a hearing upon the reasons of his change of sentiments; but they were resolute to have him dismissed. As he could not get them to hear him preach upon the subject, he printed his thoughts upon it, in 1749, though most of them would not read his book. In it he says, "that baptism, by which the primitive converts were admitted into the church, was used as an exhibition and token of their being visibly *regenerated*, dead to sin, and alive to God. The saintship, godliness, and holiness of which, according to Scripture, professing Christians and visible saints do make a profession and have a visibility, is not any religion and virtue that is the result of common grace, or moral sincerity, (as it is called,) but *saving grace*." And to prove this, he referred to Rom. ii. 29; vi. 1—4. Phil. iii. 3. Col. ii. 11, 12.* Though he did not design it, yet many others have been made Baptists by the same scriptures, and the same ideas from them. But Mr. Stoddard's doctrine had prevailed so far in that part of the country, that in all the county of Hampshire, which then included all our state west of Worcester county, not less than sixty miles wide and seventy miles long, there were but three ministers who did not hold that doctrine; and the church at Northampton denied Mr. Edwards the liberty of going out of that county, for any of those whom he was to choose to settle their controversy. At last they yielded that he might go out of that

* On a right to Sacraments, p. 20—23.

county for two, as each party was to choose five. But when the council met, in June, 1750, one of the churches whom Mr. Edwards sent to, had sent no delegate to the council, though their minister came and acted in the council, so that by the majority of one vote, Mr. Edwards was *separated* from the flock he dearly loved. Thus one of the best men in our land was rejected from his place and employment, only for coming into the belief that a profession of saving faith was necessary in all who came into communion in the church of Christ. But as this was evidently a good cause, so God was with him in it, so that he afterwards wrote a book which opened the true nature of the liberty of the will of moral agents, beyond any thing that ever was published in latter ages; and that and many other works of his are still greatly esteemed in Europe, as well as America. He was very useful in the ministry, until he died President of New Jersey College, March 22, 1758, in his 56th year.

Mr. Whitefield came a second time into New England, in the fall of 1744; when such opposition appeared against him, as never was seen before against any minister of the gospel in our land. The Corporation of Harvard College soon published a testimony against him, which was followed with one from an association of ministers at Weymouth, and another at Marlborough, with a third in the county of Barnstable, besides many individuals; and in February, 1745, Yale College did the like, and represented that he intended to root out all the standing ministers in our land, and to introduce foreigners in their stead. This was so opposite to truth, that all his life was evidently spent in labouring for the conversion and edification of precious souls, while he left the building and government of churches to others; though when persons were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, they could not be easy under teachers who were strangers to him, for he says, "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." And if many ministers in our land had not been strangers to Christ, how could they have acted as they did?

Those who had cast Mr. Robbins out of their consociation, for preaching to the Baptists without their consent, could not let him alone; because while he continued a pastor of the first church in Branford, and yet was not with them, it weakened their power. Therefore, in May, 1743, they received a complaint against him, signed by six of his people; and they appointed a committee to go to him upon it, before he knew who the complainants were, or what they complained of. But when he found who they were, he went and gave them satisfaction, and they wrote an account of it to said committee, but they would come, and insisted upon it, that Mr. Robbins must go and be reconciled to their association. This he tried for without success. Yet, seeing what a storm was gathering, he drew three confessions, and went to another of their meetings, and offered them, wherein he went as far as he could towards giving them satisfaction, short of confessing that he broke the law of God in preaching to those Baptists as he did. But as he could not in conscience confess that, they rejected all his confessions. And in May, 1745, they received a larger complaint against him, without his having any previous notice of it, and another committee was sent to him, who prevailed with him to go and offer a fourth confession to their association, wherein he pleaded that his ignorance of its being a crime to preach to the Baptists as he did, might apologize for him, so that a reconciliation might be effected with them, and among his people. But they refused to be satisfied with any thing short of his confessing that he broke the law of God in preaching to the Baptists against their consent. He then went home and laid this confession before his society, who voted that it was sufficient, and they desired him to continue in the ministry with them, and also that no councils or committees might be sent there again without their request. And his church met November 4, 1745, and renounced the Saybrook platform, and said, "We receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only perfect rule and platform of church government and discipline;"

though they did not renounce fellowship with the consociated churches.

This was worse in their view than all he had done before; and a much larger complaint was received against him than before, and a consociation was appointed to try it at Branford, September 30, 1746; and Mr. Robbins was required "in the name of Christ" to appear before them. But he drew an answer to each article of their complaint, and laid them before his church, who chose a committee to lay a copy of their former votes before the consociation, and earnestly to deny their jurisdiction over them. This was accordingly done; yet they resolved that Mr. Robbins was under their jurisdiction, and went on to hear accusations against him in his absence, and to condemn him in ten articles of his public teaching, without naming any witnesses, or any time or place when or where either of them were delivered. And concerning his conduct, they say, "He hath led off a party with him, to rise up against and separate from the ecclesiastical constitution of this colony, under which this church was peaceably established; reproachfully insinuating in a church meeting, that under the Saybrook platform it is king association in opposition to Jesus Christ, the only King of the church. In which articles, upon mature deliberation, we judge the said Mr. Robbins is criminally guilty of the breach of the third, fifth, and ninth commands, and of many gospel rules, for which he ought to give Christian satisfaction, by making a confession to the acceptance of this consociation."* This he was so far from doing, that he published a narrative of the whole affair at Boston, in which the reader may find all the above particulars.

The consociation waited a year, and then met on September 29, 1747, and after telling much of their lenity and his obstinacy, they say, "This consociation do now upon the whole judge and determine the said Mr. Robbins unworthy the ministerial character and Christian communion; and accordingly do, *in the name of the*

* Robbins' Narrative, p. 28, 29.

Lord Jesus Christ, according to the word of God, and the powers invested in this consociation by the ecclesiastical constitution of this government, depose the said Mr Philemon Robbins from his ministerial office, and ministerial and pastoral relation to the first church in said Branford, and debar and suspend him from communion in any of the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ."* This is in an answer to Mr. Robbins, which they published in 1748; in which they say of his voting with his church to renounce the Saybrook platform, "There was no more validity in such a vote, than there would have been in that, if the major part of the first society in Branford had voted to renounce the civil government of Connecticut."† And a petition was sent to their general court, that they would turn Mr. Robbins out of his meeting-house, that a regular minister might be settled therein. But such glaring conduct opened their eyes, and they ordered a council to be called out of other counties, who prevailed with New Haven consociation to restore Mr. Robbins to a seat with them, which he held to his death in 1781; but his church sent no messenger with him. And their general court revived their former acts of toleration to dissenters, and ordered a new edition of their laws to be printed, which was done in 1750, out of which their late persecuting laws were left, without any express repeal of them. Governor Wolcot published a pamphlet against the Saybrook scheme; and Governor Fitch endeavoured to explain away their power, which has since much declined.

An end was thus put to their imprisoning men for preaching; but still they were resolute for compelling all to support those parish ministers. Let it be observed, that the fathers of Plymouth colony held, that the ministers of Christ are to be supported only by his laws and influence, and not at all by the laws of men enforced by the sword of the magistrate; and many who now came out in a separation from these churches, descended from those Plymouth fathers, and meant conscientiously to

* Answer to Robbins, p. 117. † P. 86.

follow their good principles, in which others joined them; but for so doing, they suffered much, for several years, until their oppressors found their own cause was weakened thereby, and so desisted. A short view of two places may give a general view of the whole.

The minister of the first church in Norwich was settled in 1717, upon the old principles of New England; but in 1744, he procured a vote of the major part of the church, to admit communicants into it without so much as a written account of any inward change of heart at all. At the same time he openly declared his attachment to the Saybrook platform, which the church renounced when they settled him. Therefore a large number of the church drew off, and formed another church, and settled another minister; yet they were still taxed to the old minister, and many were imprisoned therefor. Of this, and their temper under their sufferings, a private letter from a widow of fifty-four years old may give some idea.

"*Norwich, Nov.* 4, 1752.

"*Dear Son,*

"I have heard something of the trials among you of late, and I was grieved till I had strength to give up the case to God, and leave my burden there. And now I would tell you something of our trials. Your brother Samuel lay in prison twenty days. October 15, the collector came to our house, and took me away to prison about nine o'clock, in a dark rainy night. Brothers Hill and Sabin were brought there next night. We lay in prison thirteen days, and then were set at liberty, by what means I know not. Whilst I was there, a great many people came to see me; and some said one thing and some another. O! the innumerable snares and temptations that beset me, more than I ever thought of before! But, O! the condescension of Heaven! Though I was bound when I was cast into this furnace, yet was I loosed, and found Jesus in the midst of the furnace with me. O, then I could give up my name, estate, family, life, and breath, freely to God. Now the prison looked like a palace to me. I could bless God for all the laughs and

scoffs made at me. O the love that flowed out to all mankind! Then I could forgive, as I would desire to be forgiven, and love my neighbour as myself. Deacon Griswold was put in prison the 8th of October, and yesterday old brother Grover, and [they] are in pursuit of others; all which calls for humiliation. This church hath appointed the 13th of November to be spent in prayer and fasting on that account. I do remember my love to you and your wife, and the dear children of God with you, begging your prayers for us in such a day of trial. We are all in tolerable health, expecting to see you. These from your loving mother,

"ELIZABETH BACKUS."

They afterwards imprisoned her brother for such taxes, while he was a member of their legislature; and they went on in such ways for about eight years, until the spiritual weapons of truth and love vanquished those carnal weapons, which have not been so used in Norwich since. And the same may be observed of Canterbury. Mr. Elisha Paine was ordained pastor of a church on Long Island in May, 1752; but as he came over to Canterbury the fall after, he was seized and imprisoned at Windham, November 21, 1752, for a tax to the minister whom the church rejected. Upon which he said, "I cannot but marvel to see how soon the children will forget the sword that drove their fathers into this land, and take hold of it as a jewel, and kill their grandchildren therewith. O that men could see how far this is from Christ's rule! that all things, which we would have others do unto us, that we should do even so unto them. I believe the same people, who put this authority into the hands of Mr. Cogswell, their minister, to put me into prison for not paying him for preaching, would think it very hard for the church I belong to, and am pastor of, if they should get the upper hand, and tax and imprison him, for what he should be so unjustly taxed at; and yet I can see no other difference, only because the power is in his hands; for I suppose he has heard me as often as I ever have him, and yet he hath taken from me by force

two cows and one steer, and now my body held in prison, only because the power is in his hands." And on December 11, he wrote to the assessors of Canterbury, and reminded them of the cruelty of the two beasts at Rome, and then said, "What your prisoner requests of you is, a clear distinction between the ecclesiastical constitution of Connecticut, by which I am now held in prison, and those thrones or beasts, in the foundation, constitution, and support thereof. For if you can show, by Scripture and reason, that they do not all stand on the throne mentioned in Psalm xciv. 20, but that the latter is founded on the rock Christ Jesus, I will confess my fault, and soon clear myself of the prison. But if this constitution hath its rise from that throne, then come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty; for it is better to die for Christ, than to live against him. From an old friend to this civil constitution, and long your prisoner.

ELISHA PAINE."*

Five days after he was released; but the extremity of a severe winter kept him long from his family, who suffered much in an unfinished house for want of his help. Mr. Solomon Paine published a book this year, to show "the difference between the church of Christ, and the churches established by law in Connecticut." And though they continued this oppression until 1771, yet their minister was then dismissed; and many confessed their faults in those oppressions, and equal liberty has been enjoyed in Canterbury ever since.

* Mr. Paine continued the pastor of his church on Long Island, till he died, in 1775, aged eighty-four.

CHAPTER XI.

The cause why Baptist churches increased in several places, though opposed by many—Two who were against them die—The corruption of many exposed—Episcopalians try for power here—The great earthquake awakens many—More Baptist churches formed—A new revival of religion among them and others—Providence college constituted—Light given about baptism by Pædobaptists; and by writings concerning religious establishments—The evil of them opened—Particularly at Boston—Universalism exposed—New revivals—Whitefield dies—Certificate laws exposed—The war comes on—The Baptists unite with their country in it—The Quakers did not.

WHEN religion was revived in 1741, there were but nine Baptist churches in all Massachusetts government, and none in New Hampshire or Vermont. As Pædobaptist instruments were chiefly used in that work, and the most of the old Baptists were not clear in the doctrines of grace, they were generally prejudiced against it. Yet the great change that was then wrought in many minds, was the evident cause of the spread of the Baptist principles in our land, which have increased ever since. The subjects of that work of grace embraced two ideas which produced this effect. The first is, that saving faith is necessary to give any soul a true right to communion in the church of Christ. The second is, that there is no warrant for a halfway covenant therein. And as infants are generally in the state of nature when they are said to be brought into covenant, infant baptism expires before these principles. Yet, natural affection, education, honour, gain, and self-righteousness, all conspire together to prejudice people against becoming Baptists. It is not strange, therefore, that but few became such for many years.

The pastor of the Baptist church in Boston was dark in doctrine, and opposed the revival of religion that began

there in 1740; therefore a few of the church drew off, and formed another church in 1742, and ordained a pastor in 1743, who was a clear preacher of the gospel, and many joined with them from adjacent towns. A second Baptist church was also formed and organized in Rehoboth, in 1743. The like was done at Stonington in Connecticut the same year. And they increased so much in New Jersey, that Mr. Dickinson, the first president of their college, wrote a pamphlet against them, which was printed both in New York and Boston, in 1746. But it was sent over to London, and Dr. Gill published an answer to it in 1749; to which Mr. Peter Clark replied in 1752; and this examination of the subject caused light to be spread in our land.

More than threescore members of the separate church in Sturbridge, including all their officers, were baptized in 1749. Elder Ebenezer Moulton, of Brimfield, baptized the first part of them, and many others about the same time. In September that year, he baptized ten persons in Bridgwater, and three in Raynham. The month before, a controversy was brought into the separate church in the joining borders of Bridgwater and Middleborough, which was managed in an unhappy manner, and served to prejudice many against the Baptist principles; yet they gradually prevailed, until their pastor and others were baptized in 1751, and others afterwards, who yet held communion with their old brethren for a number of years. Several lively preachers were received among the old Baptists in Narraganset, who had much success there; and Baptist elders went from thence, and baptized many in the separate churches in Connecticut, and it seemed as though all those churches would become Baptists; but for fear of it, fierce opposition was raised against what was called *rebaptizing*, which was declared to be a very wicked action, and some retracted it. This caused much unhappiness, and councils were called upon it, and a general meeting of churches at Exeter in May, 1753, and a larger one at Stonington in May, 1754; but they could not settle the controversy. Though the communing of all real saints together appeared to be of great im-

portance, yet many found by degrees that it could not be done in that way; for they saw that if they came to the Lord's supper with any who were only sprinkled in their infancy, it practically said they were baptized, when they believed in their consciences that they were not. And practical lying is a great sin. We ought to use all the freedom towards all men, and towards Christians especially, that we can with a good conscience; but neither Scripture nor reason can require us to violate our own consciences for any cause whatever. And upon these principles the first Baptist church in Middleborough was constituted, January 16, 1756, and their former pastor was installed in his office, June 23d following. This was the first Baptist church which was formed in an extent of country of more than a hundred miles long, from Bellingham to the end of Cape Cod, and near fifty miles wide, between Boston and Rehoboth, in which are now above twenty churches.

In two years before, gospel preachers from New York and New Jersey, had travelled several times to Newport and Swansea, and laboured among our old Baptist churches with success; and a reformation in doctrine and conduct followed, and also a friendly intercourse with our new churches. Mr. Solomon Paine, who had opposed the Baptists much, died October 25, 1754, and Mr. Thomas Stevenson, November 13, 1755, after which that opposition abated. But a cruel war now came on, which turned the minds of people off from the great concerns of the soul and eternity, to the confusions of this world. The ministers who had been against the late glorious work, were now using all their art to render the doctrines of sovereign grace odious; and the doctrine of Jesus Christ being truly the Son of God, and justification by faith in his righteousness, was treated with scorn and contempt in a publication at Boston in 1755. And the same spirit appeared in Connecticut. The Baptist minister and church of Wallingford removed from thence in 1750; but when the Congregational minister, who had persecuted Mr. Robbins, died there in 1756, his people had great difficulties about settling another. Among twenty

candidates, they could not agree about any one of them. Therefore, in the spring of 1758, they were advised to send to Cambridge, and they did so, and a man came highly recommended from thence, and the majority elected him for their pastor; and appointed his ordination to be on October 11. But instead of acting by Saybrook platform, they sent for such ministers as suited them, in their own county, and in other places, who were of their party. God says, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Rom. xvi. 17, 18. This word has been abundantly cast upon all men who have separated from ministers who were supported by force; though they have paid no regard to two characters described in the text. The first is, them who *cause divisions;* the second is, their acting *contrary to the doctrine* which the Christian church have learned; for Christ himself caused divisions between his church and the world. And because the ministers of Windham county ordained a candidate in Canterbury, in 1744, contrary to the minds of the majority of the church, divisions and offences were caused thereby through the land. Another division was now coming on about *doctrines;* for some members of the church in Wallingford, had visited their candidate, and desired to know his thoughts, "about original sin, and the saints' perseverance, the power of free-will, and falling from grace," but he refused to tell them. As they were not willing to sit under such a teacher of souls, their consociation was convened at Wallingford the day before the ordination was to be, to hear and act upon a complaint exhibited against their candidate; but he and his party protested against their meeting at that time, and refused to be tried by them. The ministers whom they had called, formed themselves into a council, and went into the meeting-house, and heard the candidate vindicate himself, before judges that his accusers refused to be tried by. Though while they were there, they received a paper,

signed by ninety-five inhabitants of that parish, who possessed about half the freehold estate therein, desiring them not to proceed in the ordination; and also a message from their consociation, warning and beseeching them not then to proceed; yet, in the face of all this, they went on and ordained him as the pastor of that parish.

Such an instance was never before known in our land; therefore the consociation adjourned, and called the southern consociation of Hartford county to meet with them; but they could not bring said party to be tried by them; therefore, at their meeting of April 3, 1759, they gave the sentence of noncommunion against the minister so ordained in Wallingford, and against the members of the church who should continue with him. They declared the ministers of their county who acted in that ordination to be *disorderly persons*, until they gave satisfaction for that offence; and they were Joseph Noyes, Isaac Stiles, and Chauncy Whittlesey of New Haven, Samuel Whittlesey of Milford, Theophilus Hall of Meriden, and Jonathan Todd of East Guildford. Two of these were sons of the old minister of Wallingford, and one of them was the tutor for whom David Brainerd was expelled from college.

Mr. Todd and William Hart wrote in favour of these men, and Mr. Edward Eelles and Noah Hobart wrote against them; and all the above things appear in their publications. Mr. Robbins was one of their judges, in an affair which affords useful lessons. Here we may see how SELF can blind the children of men. The scene of these actions was in the same town from whence all their actings against him originated. He only preached there occasionally; they settled a minister in the parish. He acted against the desire of two ministers and forty-two inhabitants; they against their consociation, and ninety-five inhabitants. In the first case the Saybrook scheme was fairly renounced, and the word of God taken in its room; in the other they only protested against the meeting of the consociation at that time, but intended to be of it afterwards. These things caused a division in the town, and another church and minister were settled there; two

Baptist churches also are since formed in Wallingford. And their conduct produced like effects in other places.

The preaching of Mr. Ebenezer White of Danbury, was not liked by a minor part of his hearers, and they went and complained of him to their association, and advised to the calling of the consociation of that district to hear and act upon it. But when Mr. White heard of it, he called his church together, June 28, 1763, and they renounced the Saybrook platform, which many of them never liked, though they did not renounce communion with the churches who were under it. When the consociation of the eastern district of Fairfield county met at Danbury in August, Mr. White and his church informed them of what they had done, and refused to be tried by them. Yet they would hear the case, and finding it to be very difficult, they adjourned, and called in the consociation of the western district of that county to act with them. After other adjournments, and much labour, they at their meeting of March 27, 1764, rejected Mr. White and a large majority of his church, and held the minority as the church and society in Danbury, and refused to recommend Mr. White as a preacher to any people, until he gave them satisfaction. But five ministers entered their protest against this last article, the first of whom was Mr. David Judson of Newtown, who, with his church, afterwards renounced the Saybrook platform. Thus those ministers caused divisions and offences, from place to place, by acting upon that arbitrary scheme. And there are now two Baptist churches in Danbury, and one in Newtown, with one hundred and twenty-five members in the three churches, and one hundred and four in the two in Wallingford. These were their numbers in 1802.

What Dr. Chauncy and others had published about bishops in each parish, encouraged the ministers who were ordained by bishops in England, to deny that any who were not so ordained could have any just right to administer gospel ordinances. And they erected an Episcopal church in Cambridge, near the college; at the opening of which a discourse was delivered, which contained bitter reflections upon the fathers of this country, for

their separation from the church of England. To this Dr. Jonathan Mayhew of Boston published a smart answer, but a reply was returned, said to be written by the Archbishop of Canterbury. This controversy was warmly carried on, until the American war came on, which issued in our independence of Britain.

The great earthquake, on the morning of November 18, 1755, served to awaken a number of people, and that and other means were blessed for the conversion of several in the time of the war that then came on. The second Baptist church in Middleborough was formed November 16, 1757, and the third on August 4, 1761, and pastors were ordained in each of them. Baptist churches were likewise formed and organized in 1761, in Norton and in Ashfield.

A revival of religion came on in the third Baptist church in Middleborough in May, 1762, and prevailed so through all the summer, that people held frequent meetings on week-days as well as the Sabbaths, and great numbers were hopefully converted and added to the church; and it spread among other denominations. Although many said they would all come to want, because they neglected their worldly business so much, yet a few seasonable showers, in a great drought, caused a double crop of corn, so that they had enough for themselves, and much to spare for others at a distance, where their crops were much cut short, which was very convincing to many. This work was much more pure, and people acted more understandingly, than in our former revivals; and if all would learn to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, they would find an addition of all needful good unto them.

This work was very extensive afterwards in many parts of this land. It came on in Ipswich, under the ministry of Mr. John Cleaveland, near the close of 1763, and caused the addition of ninety communicants to his church in less than a year. And the work was great at Providence, Norwich, and many other places in 1764; and in March that year it was greater at Easthampton on Long Island, where one Jew was converted. And as a

Baptist minister went through Woodstock in Connecticut, in December, 1763, he preached a sermon to a few people, one of whom was a young man, who had been a leader in vanity; but he was then seized with conviction, and was converted in March after, upon which four of his old companions came to try if they could not draw him back to his old ways; which they were so far from doing, that his labours with them produced a change in their minds; a great work was wrought in the town, a Baptist church was formed there, and he was ordained their pastor in 1768. And other things concurred to open a wide door for the spread of Baptist principles in our land.

Until now they had never had the government of any college, for the education of youth in human learning. Their churches in Pennsylvania and New Jersey had held an annual meeting to promote their welfare, ever since 1707; and it now appeared expedient to them, to endeavour to erect a college in Rhode Island government for the above purpose. Mr. James Manning, who was born in Elizabethtown, October 22, 1738, graduated at Princeton college in 1762, and ordained a minister of the gospel, appeared to them a suitable man to lead in this work. Therefore, on a voyage to Halifax, he called at Newport, and proposed the affair to a number of Baptist gentlemen, and they liked it well; and though they met with some opposition, yet they obtained a charter for a college, in February, 1764, from their legislature, in which the president was always to be a Baptist, and so were the majority of the corporation, though some of the Episcopal, Quaker, and Congregational denominations were to be of it. No religious test was ever to be imposed upon the scholars, though great care was to be taken about their morals.

Mr. Manning removed his family to Warren in July, where a Baptist church was then formed, and he ministered to them. In September, 1765, he was chosen president of the college, and diligently attended to the duties of it, until seven young gentlemen took their first degrees there, September 7, 1769. In the spring after the col-

lege was removed to Providence, where a large brick edifice was erected for it, and a house for the President, all by personal generosity; and no government upon earth ever gave any thing towards said buildings, or for the college funds; though vast sums had been given by the governments of Massachusetts and Connecticut to their colleges. But the buildings, library, and funds of this college, were all produced voluntarily, and chiefly from the inhabitants of Providence, many of whom sprung from the planters of the first Baptist church in America. O how far was this from the thoughts of Massachusetts, when they banished Roger Williams for opposing the use of force in religious affairs!

Mr. Hezekiah Smith was a classmate with Manning, and was ordained a minister of the gospel. Having travelled and preached it to the southward as far as Georgia, he came into New England in the spring of 1764, and preached much, among various denominations, with an expectation of going back in the fall; but a destitute parish in Haverhill prevailed with him to stay and preach to them, which he did with success; and a Baptist church was formed in the heart of the town, May 9, 1765. Upon which many raised opposition against him, and things were published against the Baptists in general; to which answers were returned; and the more their principles were examined, the more they were embraced. Controversies among their opponents had a like effect; for in 1768, Dr. Joseph Bellamy began a dispute against the halfway covenant, which was pursued for several years. Dr. Moses Mather was one who wrote against him, and he held up the covenant with Abraham, as a covenant that all ought to be in, in order to use the means of grace for their conversion. But Dr. Bellamy replied, and said, "the unbaptized have as good a right to read and hear the word of God, as the baptized have; and as good a right to believe and embrace the gospel. For by Christ's last commission, the gospel is to be preached to all nations; yea, to every creature; and that previous to, and in order to prepare men for baptism. Mark xvi. 15, 16. So that there is not the least need of being in his

external covenant, in order to have as good a right to hear and believe, and to be justified by the gospel, as any men on earth have; for there is no difference. Rom. iii. 22."* And how strong is this reasoning for the baptism of believers only! But greater things were then before them.

When the British court had determined to tax America, their bishops had great hopes of establishing their worship upon it: and one of them then said, "We may assure ourselves that this benefit will flow to the church from our present most gracious sovereign, whenever public wisdom, public care, public justice, and piety shall advise the measure. This point obtained, the American church will soon go out of its infant state, be able to stand upon its own legs; and without foreign help support and spread itself. Then the business of this society will have been brought to the happy issue intended."†

The society, to whom this was preached, had expended vast sums, for sixty-six years, to propagate what they called the gospel in America; and they now discovered what they were after; which was to have Episcopacy supported by force in our country. By the abstract at the end of this sermon, it appears that their society had then only seven ministers in the whole of North Carolina, when they had twenty-three in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Yet their profession was, to send ministers to gospelize the heathen, or to teach others who had not a sufficient support for ministers among them. And Dr. Chandler, of New Jersey, now wrote upon the same argument, which I before referred to; and the danger of their succeeding appeared to be so great, that Dr. Chauncy wrote a large answer to him, wherein he said:

"We are in principle against all civil establishments in religion; and as we do not desire any establishment in support of our own religious sentiments or practice, we cannot reasonably be blamed, if we are not disposed to encourage one in favour of the Episcopal colonists.—It

* Reply to Mather, p. 75.

† Sermon in London, February 20, 1767, by the Bishop of Landaff, p. 24, 25.

does not appear to us, that God has intrusted the state with a right to make religious establishments. If the state in England has this delegated authority, must it not be owned, that the state in China, in Turkey, in Spain, has this authority also? What should make the difference in the eye of true reason? Hath the state in England been distinguished by Heaven by any particular grant beyond the state in other countries? If it has, let the grant be produced. If it has not, all states have in common the same authority. And as they must severally be supposed to exert their authority in establishments conformable to their own sentiments in religion; what can the consequence be, but infinite damage to the cause of God and true religion? And such in fact has been the consequence of these establishments in all ages, and in all places."*

The general association of ministers in Connecticut published a letter of thanks to Dr. Chauncy, for writing this book, in a Boston paper, in 1768. But Chandler wrote again, and Chauncy replied, and said, "The religion of Jesus has suffered more from the exercise of this pretended right, than from all other causes put together; and it is, with me, past all doubt, that it will never be restored to its primitive purity, simplicity and glory, until religious establishments are so brought down as to be no more."† And yet he had published more, for thirty years, to uphold the Congregational establishments in New England, than any other man. And if any should plead that he held these not to be real establishments, that plea cannot be truth, because they hold fast three principles here, that are the foundation of all worldly establishments that ever were made under the name of Christianity. The first is, infant baptism, which lays bands upon children before they can choose for themselves; and education, honour, gain, and self-righteousness, hold them in that way all their days, in the general custom of the world. The second is, the supporting of religious teachers by

* Answer to Chandler, p. 152, 153.
† Reply, 1770, p. 144, 145.

force, by the power of the magistrate. The third is, the allowing religious ministers a power of office which the people cannot give nor take away. The church of Rome, and the church of England, were built and are now upheld entirely by these three principles: and the Congregational churches that are established by law in Massachusetts and Connecticut hold each of them fast. As long as rulers force the people to support religious teachers, it bribes them to use all their influence in favour of such rulers, and this bribes rulers to continue in that way. And God says, "A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous." Deut. xvi. 19. And so many wise and righteous men have gone in that way, that it is very difficult for their children to get out of it. But the word of God points out a clear light, which is to direct our feet in the way of peace. And he gives a most solemn warning to all, against adding to, or taking from his words. Rev. xxii. 18, 19. And no men can force others to support any religious teachers, without adding to the Holy Scriptures, our only safe rule of conduct. What vast expenses would be saved to worldly governments, if that evil was entirely renounced! For the costs of legislatures to make laws about worship, parishes, and ministers, is a main part of the expenses of all governments who go in that way. Religious pretences have caused the most of the wars that have been in the world, under the name of Christianity; and the expenses which are occasioned by wars, are as much as half of the support of government in Europe and America.

Yet the holding of ministers above the churches is still a darling point in our country, against all the light which God has given us. For the minister of Bolton, in Worcester county, drank to excess on a sacrament day, so as to shock his whole congregation. His church called him to account for it, but he did not give them satisfaction. Three councils, one after another, were called about it, but they were all for continuing him in office there; but as he had assumed the power to negative the acts of the church, and to dissolve their meeting, they called another, and chose a moderator and clerk, and made some propo-

sals to their minister, and adjourned. But as he gave them no satisfaction, they met on August 8, 1771, and dismissed him from them, and the town concurred in it.

Upon this, ministers were much alarmed, and things were published against the church, as daring usurpers of an unwarrantable power; upon which two editions of Mr. Wise's works were printed at Boston, to show what power the church once had. But the general convention of ministers at Boston, in May, 1773, published a pamphlet, to try to prove that no church had a right to dismiss their minister, without the direction of a council therein. And in August following, a council of seven churches met at Bolton, and tried hard to have that minister restored again to his office there; and because they could not obtain it, they printed their result at Boston, as their testimony against any such power in their churches. Dr. Chauncy was moderator of that council.

In 1772, a man from England, by the way of New York, came to Boston, and artfully held up that Christ had paid the debt to justice for all mankind, so that none of them would suffer in hell after the day of judgment. This gave so great a shock to the ministers who held to general redemption, that they published nothing against him in ten years; but in 1782, an anonymous pamphlet came out in Boston against him. And Dr. Chauncy published a book in 1784, wherein he held forth, that the *fire of hell* would purge away the sins of all the race of Adam, so that they would be all saved, after ages of ages.* This the pamphlet, in 1782, had called PURGATORY.†

Now an inspired apostle says, "If the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience* from dead works to serve the living God!" Heb. ix. 13, 14. This must be done in the present life, or else they who die in their sins will lift up their eyes *in torment*, and find a great gulf fixed between

* Salvation for all Men, p. 324. † Said pamphlet, p. 21.

them and the righteous, which none can pass over. Luke xvi. 22—26. And what madness is it to hold that the fire of hell can purge away any sins, instead of the blood of Christ! Dr. Jonathan Edwards published a full answer to Chauncy, in 1790.

But let us return to more agreeable things. A Baptist church was formed at Newton in New Hampshire, in 1755, and one at Haverhill, in 1765, which were the first that were formed anywhere northward of Boston. A great revival of religion then prevailed in New Hampshire, and the Baptist principle spread therein, until a Baptist church was constituted in Stratham, and a minister was ordained there in 1771, and their increase has been great that way ever since. And a powerful work came on in Swansea and Rehoboth, which increased the Baptist churches there, and raised a new one in Dighton, which is since very large. Old churches gained great light now, about doctrines and gospel order, and more than twenty new churches were formed in New England, in three years. And in the close of 1774, such a work came on in Providence, that Dr. Manning baptized an hundred and ten persons in nine months; and many joined to other churches in that town, and the work was extensive in other places.

Mr. Whitefield was taken to his rest before this, after his extraordinary labours, for thirty-four years, in England, Scotland, Ireland, and America. He came over seven voyages to our country, in the last of which he landed in South Carolina, in November, 1769, and went to Georgia. From thence he travelled through all the country, as far as the district of Maine; and in fifty-eight days he preached fifty-one sermons, before he died at Newburyport, September 30, 1770; as appears in funeral sermons for him, and in his life published since. And how wonderful were these things!

The first Baptist church in Vermont was formed in Shaftsbury in 1768, and the second was in Pownal in 1773. In the three following years, Baptist churches were constituted at Suffield, Ashford, Hampton, and Killingly in Connecticut, and Medfield, Harvard, and Chelms-

ford in Massachusetts; when the terrible calamities of the war could not stop this work. Neither could the ill-treatment which the Baptists had met with, turn them against their country, who had oppressed them; for though they had received relief from the British court, several times, yet they saw that this was done for political ends, by men who now aimed to bring all America into bondage. And we shall here take a concise view of the partiality that was often discovered, even when our rulers pretended to relieve us.

The certificate acts which were made from time to time, to exempt us from ministerial taxes, were often violated by our oppressors, especially where new churches were formed. The Baptist church that was formed at Sturbridge in 1749, gave in certificates according to law, and yet they were all taxed to the parish minister; and in two years five men were imprisoned for it at Worcester, and three oxen and eight cows were taken away, besides a great deal of other property. Several men sued for recompense, and at length judgment was given for them in one case; but then other cases were nonsuited, under the pretence that the actions were not commenced against the right persons. The Baptists judged that their damages in these cases were not less than four hundred dollars. And a representative from Sturbridge prevailed with our legislature to make a new law, in 1752, to exclude all Baptist churches from power to give legal certificates, until they had obtained certificates from three other Baptist churches, that they esteemed said church to be conscientiously Anabaptists; that is, *rebaptizers*, which they never did believe. Yet, rather than to suffer continually, most of the Baptists conformed in some measure to their laws, until they were convinced that true help could not be had in that way, and therefore they concluded in 1773 to give no more certificates, and published their reasons for so doing.

The town of Ashfield was planted in 1751, and a Baptist church was constituted and organized there in 1761, with a large majority of the inhabitants in their favour. They had upheld worship there through all the perils of

a long war; yet after it was over, others came in, and ordained a Congregational minister, and taxed the Baptist minister and his people for his support. One condition in the grant of the town was, that they should settle an orthodox minister, and build a meeting-house; and as the Baptists were taxed for doing that for a Congregational minister, they paid it. But after they had done it, a law was made in 1768, which took the power out of the hands of the inhabitants, and put it into the hands of the proprietors, many of whom did not live in the town, to tax all the inhabitants of the town for the *support* of said minister, and to lay the tax wholly upon the lands, be they in whose hands they might, and to sell the lands if the owners refused to pay it. The word *support* was not in the original grant of the town from the government. Yet in 1770, three hundred and ninety-eight acres of land, owned by the Baptists, was sold, because they refused to pay a tax laid contrary to the original grant of said lands. They sought to the legislature for relief, without any success, for near three years, and then sent to the king, in council, and got that law disannulled. But no sooner was the news of it published here, than a malicious prosecution was commenced against the character of a chief father of that Baptist church; and though he was fully acquitted upon trial, yet he got no recompense for his costs and trouble. This plainly discovers what wickedness is the consequence of supporting religious ministers by force.

More of this appeared in other places. After the Baptist church was formed in Haverhill, in 1765, they gave in certificates to the other denomination according to law, and yet they were all taxed to them; and in 1766, a large quantity of goods were taken from one of their society, and they sued for recompense in several courts, until judgment was given in their favour in 1767, by our superior court. Their opponents had promised that this should be a final trial, yet they violated that promise, and procured another trial in June, 1769, when the case was turned against the Baptists, which cost them two hundred and fifty dollars. And they suffered much other ways

for several years, but they have been well treated since. At Montague they made distress upon the Baptist committee, who signed their certificates, and not upon others; and when they sued for recompense, the case was turned against them, both in their inferior and superior courts, upon a pretence that they could not witness for themselves, though there were three of them, and if their names had not been in the lists, they could not have been exempted. And both there and in Haverhill case, Baptists were not admitted as witnesses of plain facts, because they were parties concerned; though judges and jurors were as much so as they. The Baptists in Berwick and Goreham suffered much in these ways, as many others also did. And as their exempting law expired in 1774, another was made, which required that their certificates should be recorded in each parish where the Baptists lived, who must give four-pence for a copy of it, in order to clear themselves, which is three-pence sterling; the same as was laid on a pound of tea, which brought on the war in America!

The Baptist churches began an annual association at Warren, September 8, 1767, who have done much to defend their privileges, as well as to unite and quicken each other in religion. And when they met at Medfield, September 13, 1774, they chose an agent to go to Philadelphia, when the first Congress was sitting there, to join with the Philadelphia association, to endeavour to secure our religious rights, while we united with our country in the defence of all our privileges. And when he came there, said association elected a large committee to help in the affair; and they obtained a meeting of the four delegates from Massachusetts, before other members of Congress, in the evening of October 14; to whom a memorial of our grievances about religious matters was read. This, two of those delegates endeavoured to answer, and denied that we had any reason to complain on those accounts. But when leave was given for a reply, plain facts silenced that plea. They then shifted their plea, and would have all the blame of our sufferings laid upon executive officers, and they asserted that our legislature was entirely free

from blame. Three of them joined in this plea, and one of them denied that it could be a case of conscience to refuse to give them certificates, and said it was a matter of conscience with them to support ministers by law, and that we denied them liberty of conscience, in denying their right to do it. But when our agent was allowed to speak, he brought up the case of Ashfield, where near four hundred acres of land were sold for a condition that was not in the original grant of the town, for which the blame lay directly on the legislature; and if the king in council had not disannulled that law, the Baptists might have been robbed of all their lands, as far as any thing has since appeared. He also told them that he could not in conscience give the certificates which they required, which would implicitly allow a power to man, which in his view belongs only to God. And said he, "Only allow us the liberty in the country that they have long enjoyed in Boston, and we ask no more." This was so plain, that said delegates promised to use their influence towards having that liberty granted to all our government.

But as one of them returned before said agent got home, a report was spread in the country, that he had been to Philadelphia to try to break the union of these colonies in the defence of all their privileges. He therefore soon met our Baptist committee at Boston, who sent in a remonstrance upon this subject to our provincial Congress at Cambridge, and they passed a resolve, which acquitted us of all blame in that affair; and we are now to look into their following proceedings.

A Congress, elected by the people in twelve colonies, met at Philadelphia, September 5, 1774, and sent a petition to the king for the restoration and continuance of our former privileges, and also made the best preparations that they could to defend them; but their petition was treated with contempt, and an army was sent to compel us to yield to be taxed where we were not represented. A part of the army was sent from Boston in the night, and on the morning of April 19, 1775, they killed eight men at Lexington, and some more at Concord. But the people arose against them, and they fled back the same

night, and were confined in Boston eleven months, and then their army fled from thence by sea. And such things then took place in America, as never were seen upon earth before. A minister who came from England, and then lived at Roxbury, said, upon a view of our country at that time,

"Now some hundred thousand people are in a state of nature, and yet as still and peaceable, at present, as ever they were when government was in full vigour. We have neither legislators, nor magistrates, nor executive officers. We have no officers but military ones; of these we have a multitude, chosen by the people, and exercising them with more authority and spirit than ever any did who had commissions from a governor. The inhabitants are determined never to submit to the act destroying their charter, and are everywhere devoting themselves to arms."* And a man who was born in this country, and carefully observed the events in it, inserted a note in his private diary, in January, 1776, which he said, "Great and marvellous have been our dangers and our escapes. In the midst of the worst kind of wars, we have both peace and plenty. I scarce ever knew the country to be better off for provision. This is a state of trial, and the great changes which are passing over us, serve greatly to show what is in man. As every one saw himself to be interested in the war, men were forward enough to enlist into the army, and others to supply them; so that perhaps no army was ever supplied more plentifully with provision than ours has been."

Yet a party spirit about religion still remained, and it was remarkably discovered in one place. A young Baptist minister was invited to preach in Pepperell, forty miles north-westerly from Boston, and it had so much effect, that a number of people met with a change; another minister was sent for, and six persons declared their experiences before them, who were judged to be fit subjects for baptism. And on June 26, 1778, they met in a field, by the side of a river, for worship and the ad-

* Gordon's History, vol. i. p. 427, 428.

ministration of that ordinance. But in the midst of their worship, the chief men of the town came at the head of a mob and broke it up. The ministers tried to reason with them about their conduct, but in vain; and a dog was carried into the river, and dipped, in contempt of their opinion. A gentleman of the town then invited the Baptists to his house, near another river, and they held their worship there; but the chief men of the town followed them, and two dogs were plunged in that river; and one young man dipped another there with scorn and derision of the Baptists; and an officer of the town went into the house, and advised these ministers to depart immediately out of town for their own safety. They asked if their lives would be in danger if they did not go, but received no answer. But they secretly agreed with their friends to disperse, and to meet at another place of water; and they did so, and those six persons were baptized, after which the mob offered them some further abuse. These things were laid before the Warren Association in September, by whose direction an account of them was published in Boston, which the town of Pepperell answered, and the Baptists replied thereto, and made the town ashamed of what they had done.

At the same time an event took place which weakened the society of Quakers more than any thing had done before, since they first came into existence. With much art and labour, their church had become numerous in England and America, which they held to be but one church, and that all their children were born in it, and they did not allow them to hear any teachers but their own. And they had five houses for public worship in the town of Dartmouth, which then included what is now three towns. But after our war began, one of their most noted ministers published a pamphlet, to persuade them to pay what they were taxed for the war, to defend America against Britain. Upon which they dealt with him as a transgressor of the rules of their church, and they expelled him from it in 1778. But this caused a division among them, and it reached to Philadelphia, and it opened a door for their children to go to hear other teachers; and two Baptist

churches have been formed since, where there were none before.

The Baptists were so generally united with their country in the defence of their privileges, that when the general court at Boston passed an act, in October, 1778, to debar all men from returning into their government, whom they judged to be their enemies, and named three hundred and eleven men as such, there was not one Baptist among them. Yet there was scarce a Baptist member in the legislature who passed this act.

In the same year a new plan of government was formed for Massachusetts, which took in their old taxing laws for ministers, who were exceeding earnest for its adoption; but they then failed of their design. But they, by deceitful arts, at length obtained what they were after. And, in the mean time, Dr. Chauncy published a sermon in September, 1778, wherein he held up to the world, that the neglect of our legislature, to make an act to compel the people to make up to ministers what their salaries had lacked from the depreciation of our public currency, was an *accursed thing*, which caused the defeat of our army on Rhode Island!

CHAPTER XII.

A new constitution formed—Unjust accusations against the Baptists—A plea of conscience against them—Ministers discover their mistakes—The kingdom of Christ described—Connecticut schemes against it—Yet God now revived his work greatly—Methodism described—Bishops come over from England—Episcopacy abolished in Virginia—A new constitution of government established in America—President Washington favours the Baptists—A great revival on our eastern coasts—Also to the westward.

A CONVENTION met at Boston, September 1, 1779, to form a new constitution of government for us, and they chose a committee to make a draught for it, and adjourned.

A general fast was appointed to pray for direction in the affair, on November 4; and on the 10th, the article was brought in, to give rulers power to support ministers by force; and in order to get a vote for it, Mr. John Adams accused the Baptists of sending an agent to Philadelphia, when the first Congress was sitting there, to try to break the union of these colonies in the defence of all our privileges. And Mr. Paine accused the Baptists of reading a long memorial there, in which were some things against our government, which he believed never existed. Many in the convention were greatly inflamed thereby, and a vote was obtained to adopt said article. And did not these men, "fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness?" Isaiah lviii. 4.

As the Baptist agent was soon informed of these things, he wrote a narrative of the affair, naming his accusers, and challenging them to a fair hearing upon it before any proper judges, and published it in the Chronicle at Boston, December 2, 1779; and he has never heard of any answer since. Though when the first general court upon the constitution met at Boston, October 25, 1780, a chief minister of the town said in a sermon before them, "I know there is diversity of sentiments respecting the extent of civil power in religious matters. Instead of entering into the dispute, may I be allowed from the warmth of my heart to recommend, where conscience is pleaded on both sides, mutual candour and love."*

But do any men plead conscience for violating their own promises? Or are any conscientious in denying all the country the liberty which they have long enjoyed in Boston? Yea, what do they do with their consciences in Boston, where the laws are made, since they are not enforced there? And if men call interest conscience, where is their religion? A just answer to these questions may be very serviceable. The views of another minister, who had a hand in forming our constitution, discover how far they were from right ideas about the kingdom of Christ; for he said to our general court,

* Cooper's Sermon, p. 37, 38.

"The law of self-preservation will always justify opposing a cruel and tyrannical imposition, except where opposition is attended with greater evils than submission; which is frequently the case where a few are oppressed by a large and powerful majority. This shows the reason why the primitive Christians did not oppose the cruel persecutions that were inflicted upon them by the heathen magistrates; they were few compared with the heathen world, and for them to have attempted to resist their enemies by force, would have been like a small parcel of sheep endeavouring to oppose a large number of ravening wolves and savage beasts of prey; it would without a miracle have brought upon them inevitable ruin and destruction. Hence the wise and prudent advice of our Saviour to them was, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another."*

But this is so opposite to truth, that our Lord said to his heathen judge, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from thence." John xviii. 36. And Paul says, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Therefore all the use of carnal weapons, to support religious ministers, that ever has been in the world, has been a violation of the laws of Christ; for he is the only head of his church, and each church that supports her ministers in the name of any earthly head, is a harlot. And the power of spiritual weapons was such, that God again revived his work in 1779, and it prevailed so far for three years, as greatly to increase the old Baptist churches, and to form above thirty new ones in New England, besides many more in the southern parts of America. And as pure religion is directly against all offensive wars, and fills the people of

* West's Election Sermon, May 29, 1776, p. 19.

God with an earnest desire and pursuit of justice and equity, this revival had a great influence in procuring the peace of 1783.

But as it came on, many discovered more of their own blindness; for a minister of great note in Connecticut said to their legislature, "The pastors are orderly and regularly set apart to the ministry, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, or of those who have regularly derived office power, in a lineal succession, from the apostles and Jesus Christ." And though he knew that the first ministers in our country were ordained by their churches, and did not hold to such succession, yet he said, "These were all ordained before by the bishops in England."* And they had theirs from Rome, the mother of harlots, the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. Rev. xvii. 5. 18. Great Britain has lost all her power here, and our rulers have sworn to renounce all foreign power over America, and yet they compel the people to support ministers who claim a power of office from England. How shocking is this!

They also accuse us of renouncing the true God, because we have renounced a successive baptism which came from Rome. For so many had been baptized in Connecticut, that their general association set one of their number to write against the Baptists; and he said to them, "When you rebaptize those in adult years, which we have baptized in their infancy, you and they jointly renounce that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whom we adore and worship, as the only living and true God, and on whom we depend for all our salvation."† Whereas we have only renounced an invention of men, which came from Rome, and is never named in the word of God. Yet we are constantly complained of, because we cannot receive it as his ordinance.

In the year 1784, the year in which Dr. Chauncy held

* Election sermon at Hartford, May 8, 1783, by Ezra Stiles, D. D. President of Yale College, p. 58. 61.

† An address to his Anabaptist brethren, by Joseph Huntingdon, D. D., 1783, p. 23.

up the doctrine of PURGATORY in Boston, laws were made in Connecticut to force people to support such ministers, and the like was soon done in Massachusetts. The chief rulers of New Hampshire, for many years, were not of the Congregational denomination, and therefore the people did not suffer so much from them as they did in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and so I have passed them over. And there is such a mixture in Vermont, that I have no account of great sufferings there. But the behaviour of various parties in England, at this time, may deserve some notice.

Mr. John Wesley was with Mr. Whitefield in Oxford College, where they obtained the name of Methodists, because of their strict method of acting about religion; and they appeared to be united in one cause, until Wesley came out against particular election and final perseverance, about 1739; after which Mr. Wesley travelled and laboured earnestly, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, to promote a particular sect, until America became independent of Britain; and then he took the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, and reduced them to twenty-four, with new forms of prayer and discipline, and printed them in London, in 1784, and called them, "The Sunday service in North America;" thus presuming to be a lawgiver for this great country. Many of his followers met in Maryland, December 27, 1784, and drew up a pamphlet, called, "A form of discipline for the Methodist Episcopal church in America." They hold to three orders of office, one above another, called Bishops, Elders, and Deacons, besides preachers who are not ordained. They plainly give up the opinion of a lineal succession from the apostles, because it cannot be proved. They hold to perfection in this life, and yet that saints may fall away and perish forever. They hold that Christ died equally for all mankind, and that no man is elected until he is converted. And if any one who was sprinkled in infancy is not satisfied with it, and will join with them, they will go into the water and baptize him. And they have preached these sentiments through these United States, and in Canada and Nova Scotia. Many have doubtless

been reformed by their means, and some converted; but they readily receive awakened persons to communion, without a profession of regeneration. Hereby church and world are as really bound together as they were in old worldly establishments; whereas the Son of God says to his children, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xv. 19. He chose, or *elected* them out of the world, and so they are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. i. 2. God the Father hath chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. Eph. i. 3, 4. He chose them that they *should be holy*, and not as they become holy in conversion. If our conversion and holiness were the cause of God's electing us, our salvation would be of works, and not of grace; and this would also exclude all men from hope, who see that they are wholly under sin, and have naturally no good thing in them.

There were many others in England that held to a lineal succession of office, who wanted to have power in America; but as no bishop could be ordained in England, without swearing to the king's supremacy, Dr. Samuel Seabury went into Scotland, and obtained the name of Bishop of Connecticut, from men who claimed a succession from bishops in England, who refused to swear allegiance to King William, after he came to the throne in 1689. But as this was not liked in England, letters were written to America about it, and one minister went over from New York, and another from Philadelphia, and a special act of Parliament then exempted them from said oath, and they were ordained bishops of the states where they belonged, to which they returned in 1786. So that America has men now, whom England allows to be regular bishops, and who can make others so; but as Britain cannot compel us to receive or support them, they have increased their denomination but very little anywhere,

and they have but one minister in all the old colony of Plymouth; and their establishment is abolished in Virginia.

That colony was first planted in 1607, the first of all our colonies, and the church of England had all the government there until 1775, when Britain commenced a war against us, in which dissenters from them prevailed, and took away the support of those ministers by law. And though they tried hard to regain their power afterwards, yet, in the beginning of 1786, a law was made, which said:

"Well aware that Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy Author of our religion, who, being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his almighty power to do; that the impious presumption of legislatures and rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, who being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavouring to impose them on others, have established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporal rewards, which, proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labours for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, more than on our opinions in physics or geometry; that therefore the proscribing

any citizen as unworthy the public confidence, by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which, in common with his fellow-citizens, he has a natural right; that it tends also to corrupt the principles of that very religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing with a monopoly of worldly honours and emoluments, those who will externally profess and conform to it; that though indeed those are criminal who do not withstand such temptations, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion, and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he, being of course judge of that tendency, will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others, only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to itself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition, disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.

"*Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly*, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

"And though we well know that this assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation

only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and therefore to declare this act irrevocable, would be of no effect in law, yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present, or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural right."*

Though many have imagined that such liberty favours infidelity, yet Christianity is in full favour of it; and the power of the gospel, against all the powers of Rome, prevailed as far and farther than the Roman empire extended, for two hundred years. And Christianity has never appeared in the world, in its primitive purity and glory, since infant baptism was brought in, and after it the sword of the magistrate to support religious teachers. Yea, the foregoing declaration of Dr. Chauncy plainly says as much; and the inconsistencies and contradictions, that he and others have been guilty of, serve to confirm the above observation.

The credit of the paper money, which supported our war for several years, gradually declined, until it entirely failed in 1781; so that if a kind Providence had not opened other ways for us, the independence of America could not have been established. And when that was granted, private and public debts, and the fierce methods that were taken to recover them, brought on an insurrection in Massachusetts, where the war began. It was then found to be necessary for a new plan to be formed for the government of all these states; and this was done in 1787. A large convention met at Boston, in January, 1788, to consider of this new constitution, where men discovered what was in their hearts in various ways. I before observed that a constitution for Massachusetts was formed in 1778, which was not accepted. But I would observe now, that when it was in suspense, a noted minister said to our rulers, "Let the restraints of religion once be broken down, as they infallibly would be by

* Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, p. 242—244.

leaving the subject of public worship to the humours of the multitude, and we might well defy all human wisdom and power to support and preserve order and government in the state."* Yet this same man was in the Convention of 1788, wherein much was said against adopting a constitution of government, which had no religious tests in it; and he was then in favour of the constitution, and to promote the adoption of it, he said, "The great object of religion being God supreme, and the seat of religion in man being the heart or conscience, that is, the reason God has given us, employed on our moral actions, in their most important consequences, as related to the tribunal of God, hence I infer that God alone is the God of the conscience, and, consequently, attempts to erect human tribunals for the consciences of men are impious encroachments upon the prerogatives of God."*

Can these two paragraphs, from one man, possibly be reconciled together? Yea, or can any men support ministers by the sword of the magistrate, without acting contrary to a good conscience? The support of the ministers of Christ is as plainly a matter of conscience towards God, as any ordinance of his worship is. This I shall more clearly prove hereafter. In the mean time, the sentiments and example of the greatest men in America deserve our serious notice.

After General Washington was established as President of these United States, a general committee of the Baptist churches in Virginia presented an address to him, in August, 1789, wherein they expressed a high regard for him; but a fear that our religious rights were not well secured in our new constitution of government. In answer to which, he assured them of his readiness to use his influence to make them more secure, and then said, "While I recollect with satisfaction, that the religious society of which you are members have been, throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously the firm friends of civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of

* Payson's Election Sermon, May 27, 1778, p. 20.
† Debates in Convention, p. 148.

our glorious Revolution, I cannot hesitate to believe that they will be the faithful supporters of a free, yet efficient general government."* And an amendment to the constitution was made the next month, which says,

"Congress shall make no law, establishing articles of faith, or a mode of worship, or prohibiting the free exercise of religion, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition to the government for a redress of grievances."

This was dated September 23, 1789; and it has been adopted by so many of the states, that it is part of the constitution of our general government, and yet Massachusetts and Connecticut act contrary to it to this day. And so all the evils that worldly establishments have ever produced ought to be considered as a warning to them; for our Lord assured the Jews, that all the blood which had been shed by former persecutors, whom they imitated, should be required of them. Matt. xxiii. 29—35. And the blood that was shed at Boston, an hundred and forty years ago, brought the greatest reproach upon New England of any thing that was ever done in it. A mistaken idea of good, in maintaining the government of the church over the world, was the cause of that evil; but the worst of men in our land have equal votes with the best, in our present government. A view of this caused many fathers in Boston to procure an act to abolish the use of force there for the support of religious ministers; and all that is done of that nature in the country is contrary to that example, as well as to our national government.

A work of the Spirit of God at this time discovered the glory of a free gospel; for many new plantations on our eastern coasts had scarce any ministers at all to preach to them, as a view to worldly gain could not draw them there; but a man who was born in 1734, and settled near Kennebec river, was converted in October, 1781, and then said, "Now I began to see the base views I formerly had of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the plan of

* Leland's Virginia Chronicle, p. 47, 48.

salvation; for when I had a discovery of actual sins, and of the danger I was exposed to thereby, I would repent and reform, and think what a glorious Saviour Christ was, and that some time or other he would save me from hell, and take me to glory, with a desire to be happy, but no desire to be holy. But, glory to God! he now gave me another view of salvation. Now I saw his law to be holy, and loved it, though I and all my conduct was condemned by it. Now I saw that God's justice did not strike against me as his creature, but as a sinner; and that Christ died, not only to save from punishment, but from sin itself. I saw that Christ's office was not only to make men happy, but also to make them holy; and the plan now looked beautiful to me; and I had no desire to have the least tittle of it altered, but all my cry was to be conformed to this glorious plan."

It appeared to him to be his duty to leave the care of his farm to his wife and children, and to go from house to house, for many miles round, to converse with all he could meet with, about the concerns of their souls and eternal salvation. And though many were stupid at first, yet in the beginning of 1782, powerful effects appeared, so that they set up religious meetings, and one after another came out into spiritual liberty, and he and others were led into the Baptist principles, even before they had seen a Baptist minister. But hearing of these things at a distance, some preachers went among them, and the work was promoted thereby, and it went on through the year 1783. In May, 1784, a Baptist church was formed in Bowdoinham, and another in Thomaston, and pastors were settled in each of them. A church was also formed in Harpswell, January 20, 1785, and a pastor was ordained there the fall after. These three churches began an association in 1787, which increased to six churches in 1790, and three hundred and seventeen members.

These new churches had many secret and open enemies to encounter in a wilderness; yet God was pleased to revive his work again in 1791, so that five churches were formed in that year, and four in 1792. And by August, 1802, they had increased to forty-one churches, and

twenty-five ordained ministers, in the counties of Cumberland, Lincoln, and Kennebec, and one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four members, besides many preachers who were not ordained. So many in eighteen years. In the mean time there was such a revival granted in and near Swansea, in 1789, and on our western borders in that and the year before, that above five hundred persons were baptized in those places. To open still more clearly the nature of what these people call religion, I shall give a distinct account of one new church on our western borders.

In the adjoining borders of Bethlehem, Sandisfield, and Tyringham, in the county of Berkshire, a number of people, who lived remote from parish meetings, set up a meeting among themselves, in 1784, to pray, sing, and to read sermons; and they concluded not to admit any man who was not a Pædobaptist to carry on among them. And they went on in that way, until a man who was a Baptist came to their meeting in the fall of 1787; and as he spake in public at times, they allowed him to do so once among them. This he did to their satisfaction, so that they desired him to proceed in that way, and such a blessing was granted on his labours, that a Baptist minister was sent for in March, 1788, when nineteen persons were baptized and formed into a church, called the Second Baptist church in Sandisfield. And they increased to forty members, when Mr. Benjamin Baldwin was ordained their pastor, June 9, 1790. They afterwards met with cruel oppression from the Congregational party, from which they in vain sought for relief in courts; though their oppressors at length gave up such proceedings. Yet declension and coldness came on among the Baptists, until the work of God was again revived among them in June, 1798, and prevailed through the winter after. And they say, "conferences and lectures were attended in Sandisfield, Bethlehem, and Tyringham, and in the two last places almost every night in the week. Neither storms of snow, nor piercing cold could obstruct their attending divine worship. The most delicate characters did not observe the severity of the weather, in

following Jesus down the banks of Jordan into the liquid grave. This work appeared to go on with great solemnity, and scarce an instance appeared of any overheated zeal, or flight of passion. Both sinners under conviction, and those who were newly brought into the liberty of the gospel, conversed in their meetings with the greatest freedom; they spake one at a time, in the most solemn and impressive manner. Their enemies were bound, and there was not a dog to move his tongue. It appeared also in the first church, and in neighbouring towns. In one year there were added to this church about sixty, and about as many to the first church, and some to other churches. In the following years, about twenty were added to our church each year. Our present number is one hundred and seventy-five, November 12, 1801."

CHAPTER XIII.

Manning's character and death—Others raised to supply his place—The increase of the Baptists makes others expose themselves—Cruelty shown to the Baptists—Their first church in Connecticut better treated—They increase there—Religion greatly revived through the country—Even to Virginia, Georgia, and Kentucky—A book from England reprinted against them—Remarks upon it.

Dr. Manning was a faithful preacher of the gospel, and president of our college for twenty-five years, until he was called out of our world, July 29, 1791, in his fifty-third year. He was a good instructer in human learning, but at every commencement he gave a solemn charge to his scholars, never to presume to enter into the work of the ministry, until they were taught of God, and had reason to conclude that they had experienced a saving change of heart. And a tutor in the college, who appeared to have met with such a change in October, 1789, was instrumental of a revival of religion, both in the

college and in the town, and he was called into the ministry, and then was a president of the college eleven years. And then another tutor was hopefully converted, and called into the ministry, and has been president ever since. And I hope succeeding ages will follow these examples.

But as the Baptists increased much, in many parts of our land, a minister in the west parts of Massachusetts endeavoured to make an improvement upon the plan which Dr. Stiles had published in Connecticut; and his book was so pleasing to many, that it passed six editions in about two years, the last of which was at Boston, in 1793. His text is Matt. vii. 15, 16; and he tried all his art to represent all teachers in our land to be wolves in sheep's clothing, who were not ordained by ministers who hold a succession from England, and who do not regard parish lines. And he says, "A good shepherd attends to his own proper charge; the wolf is a rapacious, prowling animal, not satisfied with taking out of one flock, he roams from flock to flock, and can never have enough." And of an uninterrupted succession from the apostles, he says, "It is by no means necessary, that by historical deduction we should prove an uninterrupted succession; we have a right to presume it, until evidence appears to the contrary."* But God says, "Who hath *required* this at your hands to tread my courts? Your hands are full of *blood*." Isaiah i. 12, 15. And the *bloody hands* of teachers in Rome and England could never convey just authority to any other ministers.

This was so evident to the fathers of this country, that they allowed none to be pastors of their churches, but such as each church elected and ordained, as I before proved. And Mr. Cotton said, "The power of the ministerial calling is not derived from ordination, whether Episcopal, or Presbyterial, or Congregational. The power of the ministerial calling is derived chiefly from Christ, furnishing his servants with gifts fit for the calling; and nextly from the church (or congregation) who

* Lathrop's Discourses, p. 26. 56.

observing such whom the Lord hath gifted, do elect and call them forth to come and help them."*

From hence came the name Congregational, the meaning of which many have departed from, though they still usurp the name. But it is well known in America, that it is the election of the people that gives our civil officers their power, and not the oaths which they take from other officers. And ordination of ministers is no more than swearing them to be faithful in that office. Their being furnished with grace and gifts for it, is the most essential thing in the affair; for an inspired apostle says, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Christ Jesus. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11; v. 1—5.

Here we may plainly see, that the gifts and graces which God bestows on men for the ministry, gives them their internal call to go into that work; and the union of the church in calling and receiving them, and the acting as a united body, is the essence of the government which Christ has established in each of his churches. All men who claim a power of office above the churches, desire to be lords over God's heritage. And we must not forget

* Answer to Williams, part second, p. 82.

that teachers are to be known by their fruits, and not by ordination. Thorns and thistles wound the flesh, or tear away the property of others; which is done by imprisoning their persons, or taking away their goods unjustly. If we regard this rule, which Christ has given to know false teachers by, how plainly do they appear in our land! A great many instances of imprisonment, and spoiling of goods, to support ministers whom the people did not choose, have been given already, and more are before us.

The Baptist church in Barnstable was formed, June 20, 1771, and they were not free of sufferings, though they were not great, until God revived his work there in 1781, and it increased their church and society, and they ordained a pastor therein, in 1788, who had preached to them five years. Yet in that time, and in two years after, more than a hundred and fifty dollars were forced from them for ministers whom they did not hear. But the committee of the Warren Association met at Boston, in January, 1791, and wrote to the officers of the parishes who oppressed them, in such a manner as caused them to refrain from proceeding in that way, though they did not restore the money which they had taken away unjustly. Much greater evils were soon after done in another place; for a Baptist church was formed and organized in the south part of Harwich in 1757, and they built them a meeting-house, and carried on their worship for about forty years, when there was no Congregational minister in that parish. But when the Baptists were without a pastor, in the fall of 1792, a Congregational minister was ordained there, and the Baptists treated him in a friendly manner, while they still maintained their own worship, and soon got them another minister. Yet after they had done it, a few of the Congregational party, in the beginning of 1794, taxed all the Baptist church and society to their minister; and near the close of 1795, they imprisoned six men for it, and forced away much property from others. This was so glaringly unjust, and even contrary to the law of the government, that the Baptists sued for recompense, in 1796, and obtained judgment in their favour, in their county court. But their oppressors appealed to their su-

perior court, and obtained judgment against the Baptists, who in the whole lost above five hundred dollars. False witnesses had an evident hand in this. And as the Congregational party found that their courts favoured them, they thought they might do as they pleased.

An aged and pious Baptist deacon, who never was of the Congregational party, wrote to Boston, November 12, 1799, and said, "On the 26th of last July, the collector of Harwich came and seized about four or five bushels of my rye, and carried it off, and sold it for one dollar, and made above two dollars charge on it; and on the 13th of August, the same collector, Edward Hall, came and seized about three tons of my hay, and carried it off, and sold it for forty-nine shillings, and returned me five shillings and sixpence. For all this I was taxed to their minister but seven shillings and a penny. I have given you as exact account as possible. These from yours in gospel bonds,

ABNER CHASE."

The rye was taken out of the field before it was threshed, so that the exact quantity was not known. Now the only reason that is given in our constitution of government, for empowering rulers to support teachers by force, is because "the happiness of a people, and the good order of civil government essentially depend upon piety, religion, and morality." But how opposite hereto is the above conduct! Our Lord says, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." Mat. vii. 12. And is there one man among us, who would be willing to be compelled to support any teacher that he never chose? Yet this is the natural consequence of allowing any men to support teachers by the sword of the magistrate. And this practice has caused the effusion of blood among all nations, more than any other means in the world. And the combination of rulers and teachers herein, I believe, is the beast and false prophet, which will finally be cast into the burning lake. Rev. xix. 20. When this shall be done, the glory of the latter day will come on, as it is described in the next chapter; though this great event is freely left with Him to whom it belongs.

But as God never allowed Israel to use any force for the support of his priests, how can any be willing to use compulsion for the support of religious ministers? No man can be satisfied that others have a right to take away his property for nothing, yea, and worse than nothing.

Any Congregational minister may avoid oppressing the people, if he will. This appeared plain in the case of the first Baptist church in Connecticut. It was formed about 1705, in the town of Groton, under the ministry of Mr. Valentine Wightman. They suffered some at first, but when Mr. John Owen became the minister of the town, he was not for forcing any money from the Baptists; and when the great revival of religion came on, he and Wightman were agreed in it, until the latter died in 1747. His son. Timothy Wightman, was ordained in his place, May 20, 1756, and he was a faithful and successful minister, until he died joyfully, November 14, 1796, aged near 78, when he left 215 members in his church. After which, his son, John Gano Wightman, succeeded him in that office. A daughter of their first pastor married a Mr. Rathbun, two of whose sons, and two of his grandsons, are ordained Baptist ministers, and so have been some others of the Wightman family.

Their first minister assisted in forming a Baptist church in Stonington, in 1743, and a second was formed there in 1765. But a number there and more in Groton were then for continuing the communion of the two denominations together, and many churches were formed upon that plan; and they began a yearly meeting in 1785, called, The Groton Conference. But they have given up mixed communion in later years, and are come into connexion with the rest of our associations.

Much declension and coldness about religion came on in 1797, which was lamented by the faithful of different denominations; but a great work came on in the spring of 1798, in many parts of America. It began at Mansfield in Connecticut, in a remarkable manner. A letter from Windham in October mentions it, and says, "The Spirit of the Lord seemed to sweep all before it, like an overflowing flood, though with very little noise or crying

out. It was wonderful to see the surprising alteration in that place in so short a time. I conclude there are not less than an hundred souls converted in that town since the work began. It soon after began in Hampton, but did not spread with that degree of rapidity as it did in Mansfield. The same happy work has lately taken place in Ashford." Soon after this, Hartford, their capital city, experienced the like work among the Congregational and Baptist societies. A Presbyterian minister, who went from Massachusetts to a town above them, said on February 6, 1799, "I stopped at Hartford, and preached five sermons. The spirit of hearing at Hartford is greater than any representations which have been made. Young people of both sexes flock by hundreds, and the prospect is flattering in the extreme. Conference meetings are held every night in different private houses. In Mr. Strong's society sixty are thought to be under conviction, and twenty have been hopefully brought into gospel liberty. In* Mr. Nelson's thirty, and some in Mr. Flint's. This sacred flame has spread into many neighbouring towns, and the pious are flocking into Hartford to be eye-witnesses of this glorious work. I have felt myself so much engaged in preaching, visiting, and conversing with old and young, that my attention has been literally taken off from wife, children, flock, and bodily infirmities." It was said that this work spread, more or less, into an hundred towns in Connecticut.

In April, 1798, Mr. Blood, pastor of a Baptist church at Shaftsbury in Vermont, had his soul greatly affected with the low state of religion among them, with earnest cries that God would pour out his Spirit upon the souls of men, and save them from sin and ruin. In July following, a person who had been converted before, came forward in baptism; and her declaration and example awakened many others, and four were baptized in August, and seventeen in September. And the work went on in such a manner, that on February 21, 1799, he said, "The whole number added to this church, since last

* Nelson's church are Baptists.

May, is one hundred and seventy-five; twenty-five by letter and other ways, and one hundred and fifty by baptism. Our whole number is three hundred and forty-six. Many of this number are removed into different parts of the country; there are, however, nearly three hundred that live in the vicinity, the remotest of them not more than six miles from our meeting-house. There are also about seventy added to the west church in this town since the work began; and thirteen to the east church. In years past there has not been the most cordial fellowship between the three churches in this town; but the Lord has now effected a happy union between us. On the last Lord's-day in January, we all met at one communion table. That happy day my soul had desired for years. Nothing but experience could have made me believe it possible, that I could have felt so much solid delight, anticipated so much trouble, and rejoiced with so much trembling, at one and the same time. That day I trust will never be forgotten by me. In about two months after the work began, the whole town seemed to be affected. Conference meetings were attended two or three times in a week in almost every neighbourhood; and it was surprising to me, that scarcely a single instance appeared of any overheated zeal, or flight of passion. Both sinners under conviction, and those newly brought into the liberty of the gospel, conversed in their meetings with the greatest freedom; they spake one at a time a few words, in the most solemn manner I ever heard people in my life. And in general they spake so low, that their assemblies must be perfectly still, or they could not hear them; yet a remarkable power attended their conversation. Sinners would tremble as though they felt themselves in the immediate presence of the great Jehovah. Some of all ranks and characters among us have been taken; from the most respectable members of society, to the vilest in the place. Some of our most noted Deists have bowed the knee to King Jesus; and a number of Universalists have forsaken their delusions, and embraced the truth." And when the Shaftsbury Association met in June, 1799, they had accounts that two hundred and fifty-nine had

been added in the year, to the three churches in Shaftsbury, and not one member had died in that time. Also that the addition to their whole association that year was seven hundred and thirty-two.

This work was also great on our eastern coasts. Mr. Peter Powers, a Congregational minister on Deer Island in Penobscot Bay, wrote from thence, March 20, 1799, and said, "In the beginning of June last, I was called to Mount Desert to administer sacraments to a church who have not a stated pastor, and tarried with them about nine days; when, in preaching my second sermon, the glory of the Lord came down in a wonderful manner. One convicted, and hopefully converted under the sermon, was added to the church about two days after, and three others who had before obtained a hope. Three months after this I went again to administer the Lord's supper, at which time I admitted twenty-eight who had hopefully been brought home in the interval. The work of conviction was then going on powerfully in the town, and spreading into those adjoining on the same island. Our association had licensed dear Mr. Ebenezer Eaton to preach, who improved his talent, labouring night and day among them, whom the Lord remarkably owned. How many have been brought out since I was there, I am not informed; but according to the best accounts, there are many. The Lord multiply the number, and add to the church of such as shall be saved.

"I now come a little nearer home. In the beginning of winter, this glorious work began in Sedgwick, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Daniel Merrill. Perhaps there hath not been a work so powerful, and so much like the work fifty-eight years ago. In a time of such extraordinaries, it could not reasonably be expected but some things would be a little wild and incoherent, considering the various tempers, infirmities, and dispositions of mankind: but I believe my young dear brother Merrill, together with experienced Christians, were very careful to distinguish the precious from the vile; to correct errors, *to set them in the way of His steps*, so that there appears to be no prevalence of enthusiasm among them, accord-

ing to the best information. How great the number is of those who have been brought to hope, I am not able to give any tolerable account. Some say there are about an hundred, others about double that number; I believe they are all very uncertain. Blessed be God, the work is yet going on there, though not with equal rapidity.

"And now, dear sir, let your imagination paint to your view the striking scene of a hundred souls, men, women, and children, at the same time under the work of the law. The tears, sobs, groans, and cries issuing from scores at a time! All the terrors of the law crowding and pressing in upon them; their sins, in infinite number and aggravations, staring them in the face; all their old vain hopes gone, and cut off, and every refuge failing! Hear them freely confessing their old abominations, their former enmity to the great doctrines of original sin, election, the sovereignty of divine free grace, the power of God displayed in effectual vocation; above all, the justice of God in their damnation! How often are souls brought out into peace and comfort of the love of God, and the sweet consolations of the Holy Spirit! The dead hear the voice of the Son of God, and live. Children are brought to cry, 'Hosanna to the Son of David.' Indeed this glorious work has been wonderful among children; and God has made instruments of them to perfect praise in carrying on his work.

"This blessed work of God has begun in Blue Hill; but as yet has not gained the ascendency. I shall therefore come to my own dear people of Deer Isle. And here, perhaps, the work is as remarkable as at Sedgwick, but not so rapid. Not more than eight months ago it appeared to me that religion was near expiring among us, except in a very handful of professors. Deism had taken an unaccountable stride, and spread itself over a great number of the inhabitants. And now, no Bible, no Christ; but the Christian religion, and Christians, were the song of the drunkard; and every drunkard, and every vice, was deemed harmless, and inoffensive to God. I had no reason to think but by the next annual meeting of the town, they would vote the gospel out from them. When

the afore-mentioned work at Penobscot and Mount Desert was going on, it seemed to have no influence on our people. This, you may be sure, was very grievous to me. However, I think I was enabled to bear witness to the truth with great freedom. In October, I perceived a more close attention to the word, but nothing special as yet. After I was confined to my house, the work began to appear; and though I could not go abroad to preach at the meeting-house, there was seldom a day but more or less visited me under their trouble, and I preached in my own house when I was not able to stand on my feet. At length we had the assistance of Mr. E. Eaton, whom God remarkably owns. I believe there are about forty men, women, and children, who have obtained a hope; and great numbers are under pressing conviction. The work is now on the increase. May the Lord continue and still increase it, till they are all brought in. The mouth of deism is at present stopped, and against the children of Israel not so much as a dog is suffered to move his tongue."

A Baptist minister of Lyme in Connecticut, on June 30, 1799, wrote to Boston, and said, "Though the severity of last winter was tedious, yet I have not heard any one complain, or shrink at the cross, on account of the coldness of the weather. This work has been gloriously carried on in the spirit of love. In the first part of it, there was great crying out, but it gradually subsided into free deliberate conversation on the dreadful situation they were in by nature, and their full determination to continue seeking till they should find him of whom Moses and the prophets did write. I never saw less opposition to any work of God I ever was acquainted with. More than a hundred we hope have received the grace of God, and more than eighty have joined with our church. The present number of members is three hundred and thirty-six."

Extracts from these and other letters were printed in a pamphlet at Boston, and afterwards at Philadelphia. At the same time they had a great work among the Baptists near Kennebec river. Elder James Potter, the instru-

ment of beginning the revival there, had ninety-seven members added to his church in Bowdoin, in 1798 and 1799; and five hundred and seventy-five were then added to the whole of their association. And Boston, Bridgwater, Middleborough, and many other places had a share of these blessings; and so had some places to the southward.

I received a letter from Elder Benjamin Watkins of Virginia, dated June 30, 1801, in which he says, "I have lived to see several revivals in our parts, but the last has been the greatest, which originated about two years ago, in several churches belonging to the middle district association. Before the revival began, wickedness had gotten to a great height. Deism and irreligion abounded on every hand. Professors had become very carnal, many had apostatized, so that there were but a few names in Sardis who had not defiled their garments; so that I had some awful fears about our condition, and was dreading that some great judgment would befall our wretched land. But, contrary to my fears, the Lord visited us in a way of mercy, by stirring up his church often to assemble together, and to carry on worship by prayer and fasting, called *prayer meetings*. And he came amongst us, and the sacred flame has spread in various parts of Virginia; so that we may truly say, The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage.

"Our church, called Spring Creek, has an addition by baptism, since the revival began, of upwards of two hundred members; brother Clay's about the same number, or more; brother Smith's about an hundred; Tomahawk Church about fifty; Skinquarter near an hundred; Elder Webber's church two hundred or more; and several other churches have had some smart additions. The work has chiefly been among the young people; there has not been nigh so much noise amongst us, as there was in 1785 and 1786. Many would come and give a declaration of the work of God upon their souls, that made no noise at all; and, what was remarkable, a number of children, from ten to fifteen years of age, would come and tell of the goodness of God, while the old people, who had lived

to see several revivals, are still left out, exposed to the wrath and displeasure of God."

All the churches mentioned above, are in the three counties of Powhatan, Chesterfield, and Goochland, in the middle part of Virginia, a little above the city of Richmond, their capital. I had much delight in preaching in all of them, when I was there in the spring of 1789, when they had about two hundred Baptist churches in the whole of Virginia. And the work has been great since in many places farther southward. A minister in the upper part of Georgia wrote to his friend in Savannah, November 17, 1801, and said, "several churches here, within three or four months past, have received and baptized from twenty to fifty persons; and one in Elbert county has had an addition by baptism of about an hundred and forty. And according to the best accounts from Kentucky, there have been added to the Baptist churches, since last March, near six thousand, while multitudes were joining to the Methodists and Presbyterians."

This was put into our public papers, and sent into all the country. Those who held to infant baptism were very uneasy under such things, which they discovered in a remarkable manner; for early in 1802, a book from England was reprinted at Exeter, in New Hampshire, written by a minister who had been a Baptist, who held up to the world, that the greatest writers in England against infant baptism were guilty of sophistry and deceit in their arguments, as he had clearly found by experience. And it was said that this testimony had been published seven years in England, and no answer had been made to it. This was so wonderful, that it passed four or five editions in about a year, in the different States of New England. But when this glorying was at the highest, an answer came out of the press at Boston, in December, 1802, which was first published in London the same year that the first book came out there. The facts here follow.

Mr. Peter Edwards was first a zealous advocate for infant baptism in London, and then turned suddenly from it; became a Baptist preacher, and was ordained in a

Baptist church near Portsmouth in England; but in about ten years he changed again, and published this book, to give the reasons for his renouncing the principles of the Baptists, in the beginning of 1795; and Dr. Joseph Jenkins of London answered him the same year. Edwards holds up, with much confidence, that faith and repentance were required of all adult persons, in order for circumcision as well as baptism; and therefore that all which is said in the gospel about the baptizing of believers, is no argument against believers having their infants baptized. He accuseth the Baptists in general of denying the use of inferences and consequences, in arguments for infant baptism, but of using them against that practice, which he calls sophistry and deceit. Having disarmed the Baptists, as he imagined, he lays down his foundation in these words: "1. God has instituted in his church the membership of infants, and admitted them to it by a religious rite. 2. The church membership of infants was never set aside by God or man; but continues in force, under the sanction of God, to the present day." p. 90.

But as the Baptists never denied the true use of inferences and consequences in any argument, the charge of deceit and sophistry must be turned back upon him who advanced it; and whether his foundation can stand, may be judged of by the following things.

1. Circumcision was not known in the world, for above two thousand years after it was created; and who will say that God had no church in the world for all that time? Yea, when circumcision was instituted, Lot and other righteous men had no concern in it; neither had any females among the posterity of Abraham, though women are baptized under the gospel as well as men. 2. God said to Israel, "The life of the flesh is in the *blood*, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls." Lev. xvii. 11. And no worship was ever accepted of God from the beginning without *blood* in sacrifices. Abraham shed his own *blood* in circumcision, as the father of all believers in all nations. Rom. iv. 18. And thus he was a type of Christ, who shed his *blood* to atone for the sins of all true be-

lievers, even to the end of the world. 3. Abraham had no right to circumcise any male but such as were born in his house, or bought with his money; and he circumcised all the *men* of his house, the same day that he circumcised himself, of whom he had before three hundred and eighteen soldiers. Gen. xiv. 14; xvii. 33, 27. And how far is this from a warrant for *infant* baptism. 4. No females were to be circumcised, to show that it was a *man* and not a woman who was to die for us. 5. The bloody sign of circumcision weakened men so much, that two men destroyed a whole city, three days after the men in it were circumcised. Gen. xxxiv. 25. But no infant that ever was sprinkled could know that it was done, if they were not told of it by others. So far are they from answering a good conscience in baptism. 1 Pet. iii. 21. None but believers can do it. 6. Abraham was not to circumcise any stranger, until he had bought him as a servant with his money, which was a type of our being bought with the blood of Christ; and after he had done it, he said, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping the commandments of God. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." 1 Cor. vii. 19. 23. Which is a plain repeal of the covenant of circumcision. It was a type of the death of Christ to come, and baptism is to be done by faith in him who is already come. This is a reason why men might be circumcised before they believed, and why baptism is only for professing believers. 7. Since he is come, he says, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 26—29. Three things are here excluded from baptism, which were essential in circumcision. 8. The children of Israel had no right to admit strangers by households to circumcision and the passover, until the day in which they came out of Egypt. Ex. xii. 43—51. But when

they were going into Babylon, it was said, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a *new* covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. xxxi. 31—34. This is the pure covenant of grace, since the death of Christ hath taken away the *old* covenant. Heb. viii. 7—13. Language cannot distinguish two covenants more clearly than God hath here done it. And until old and new, first and second, can be made to mean but one covenant, men can never prove infant baptism by said covenant. 9. God promised that kings should come out of Abraham. Gen. xvii. 6. And this was fulfilled in David and his race, and in the King Messiah; and this shows that no man now can stand in such a relation to his children as Abraham did to his. Aaron was also a type of Christ, and his lawful posterity were the only priests in Israel until Christ came, when the priesthood was *changed;* and Christ is both our king and priest. Heb. vii. 12. And God says to those who are *born again*, among all nations, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Pet. i. 23. ii. 9. And such are the only priests and holy nation that are ever named in the church of Christ. By his death he abolished all those ancient types, and formed his church of all souls who are born again among all nations; and officers in his church are

never called priests therein, in distinction from other children of God. Worldly churches have been built upon infant baptism, which is not named in the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER XIV.

A view of the Baptist churches in South Carolina—In Pennsylvania and New Jersey—In Virginia—Presbyterians there—A difference among the Baptists healed—The cause of equal liberty among them—A view of them in North Carolina—In Georgia—Of negro Baptists—Of the Baptists in the State of New York—In Kentucky—Of associations—Of the number of Baptists in all America—Of late revivals—Of their likeness to the first fathers of our country—How infant baptism originated—A happy change in our government—Light from the case of Israel—Of the latter-day glory.

Truth, and love, and persecution for the same, caused the first planting of New England; and it also caused the planting of Baptist churches in the southern parts of America. Some men from here, and some from England, Wales, and Ireland, all had a hand in it. When Elder William Scraven was cruelly persecuted in the province of Maine, in 1682, he went to Charleston in South Carolina, and became pastor of a Baptist church there. How long it had been formed I know not. But when the Baptist church in Boston wanted a pastor, and sent for him, who had been one of them, he wrote to them, June 2, 1707, and said, "Our minister who came from England is dead, and I can by no means be spared. I must say it is a great loss, and to me a great disappointment; but the will of the Lord is done." And he wrote again, August 6, 1708, and said, "I have been brought very low by sickness, but I bless God, I was helped to preach, and administer the communion last Lord's-day; but am still weak. Our society are for the most part in health, and I hope thriving in grace. We are about ninety in all."

And his posterity have been honourable and useful in those parts ever since. Mr. Isaac Chanler was a Baptist minister among them for many years, and a book of his upon the doctrines of the gospel was printed at Boston in 1744. Mr. Oliver Hart, from Pennsylvania, got to Charleston in 1749, just after Mr. Chanler died, and was pastor of that church thirty years. But as he was heartily engaged for liberty in America, he left Charleston, before the British forces took it, in 1780, and settled as pastor of the Baptist church at Hopewell, in New Jersey, the same year, where he was very useful, till he died in 1795. But the Baptist cause has prevailed much in that state to this day.

Thomas Dungen of Newport was one of the signers of the request to Mr. Clarke, to go as their agent to England in 1651, the original of which I now have. And about 1684, two years after Pennsylvania began, Dungen went there, and preached the Baptist principles among the people, with considerable success; and his posterity are numerous among them ever since. And about 1686, Elias Keach, son to Elder Benjamin Keach of London, came over to Philadelphia, a wild young man, but was soon after converted, and laboured earnestly to collect the Baptists together; and they formed a church at Pennepeck, eleven miles from Philadelphia, in 1688. Mr. Keach also was helpful in forming a Baptist church at Middletown, and another at Piscataway in 1689; and one at Cohansey in 1690, all three in New Jersey. And these four, with that at Charleston, were all the Baptist churches that were formed south of New England, before the year 1700. Many of those who constituted the church at Cohansey, came from Ireland; though one of them was Obadiah Holmes, Esq. a son of the sufferer at Boston in 1651; and others of his posterity have since been members of the church in Middletown. Piscataway, on Raritan river in Jersey, sprang partly from people who came from Piscataqua river, which has Kittery upon the north side of it, where the Baptist church was formed in 1682, who were scattered by persecution. Other members of those churches went from Rhode Island colony, as ap-

pears by the publications of Mr. Morgan Edwards, in 1770, and 1792. He was born in Wales, from whence also came many ministers and members of those churches; and I took many of the above things from him.

And he informs us of many people who came over from Wales in 1701, and resided near their brethren at Pennepeck, until they removed in 1703, and planted a church in a place they called Welshtract, then under the government of Pennsylvania, but now under Delaware State. In 1770, they had increased to ten churches in Pennsylvania, and six hundred and sixty-eight members, besides a few who kept the seventh-day Sabbath. He gives an account also of the Tunkers, the first of whom came from Germany in 1719, and had increased to fifteen societies, and a large number of communicants, who were not in fellowship with the English churches. They dip persons with their faces forward, three times over. They hold to general redemption, and are much like the old Quakers in their general conduct, though more strict than they are now. The Mennonists also came from Germany, and are of like behaviour, but they are not truly Baptists now. Their fathers were so in Luther's day, until confinement in prison brought them to pour water on the head of the subjects, instead of immersion; and what was then done out of necessity is now done out of choice, as other corruptions are. When Edwards published his book in 1792, the first-day Baptists in Jersey had twenty-four churches, and two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four members; and those who kept the seventh-day three churches and two hundred and forty-nine members. And in 1802, the Philadelphia Association had two thousand six hundred and ninety-five members.

North Carolina had but little appearance of religion in any part of it, until late years. Some Baptist ministers from New Jersey and Pennsylvania travelled and laboured there with some success, and some who went from New England settled there. Shubael Stearns was born in Boston, January 28, 1706; but he went to Connecticut, where he was baptized, and was ordained at Tolland, March 20, 1751, and continued there three years. But

then his soul was fired with zeal to carry light into those dark parts; and in August, 1754, he and others set off for that purpose, and some of them got into North Carolina before him; and he wrote to Connecticut from the south part of Virginia, that they informed him from Carolina, "That the work of God was great, in preaching to an ignorant people, who had little or no preaching for a hundred miles, and no established meeting. But now the people were so eager to hear, that they would come forty miles each way, when they could have opportunity to hear a sermon." This was dated June 13, 1755; and Stearns went and settled upon Sandy Creek, which runs into Cape Fear river, where he formed a church, November 22, 1755, which increased to six hundred and six members in a few years, and several other churches were soon formed round him.

Daniel Marshall was born at Windsor in Connecticut, and after he was called to preach, he went and laboured some time among the Indians, in the upper part of New Jersey, and then followed Stearns into North Carolina, where he was very successful. And in and after 1758, many were converted and baptized near the south borders of Virginia, and they began an association in 1760, of five churches in Carolina, and one in Virginia, and they increased fast. On October 16, 1765, Stearns wrote to Connecticut, and said, "The Lord carries on his work gloriously in sundry places in this province, and in Virginia, and in South Carolina. There has been no addition of churches, since I wrote last year, but many members have been added in many places. Not long since, I attended a meeting on Hoy river, about thirty miles from hence. About seven hundred souls attended the meeting, which held six days. We received twenty-four persons by a satisfactory declaration of grace, and eighteen of them were baptized. The power of God was wonderful."

But we must now come to Virginia, of which it may be said, The first is last, and the last first. It was planted in 1607, the first of all our English colonies; and though it was done entirely from worldly motives, yet the worship of the church of England was established by law,

and no other worship was allowed of there for an hundred years. In 1643, three Congregational ministers went there, at the request of a number of the inhabitants, but they were forced to depart the colony, after preaching a few sermons. And directly upon it, the savages were let loose upon the English, and destroyed about five hundred of them. This one of them declared in England afterwards, where he again suffered from Episcopalians.* In 1644, Daniel Gookin left Virginia, and became a very useful man in Massachusetts for many years.†

The first Baptist church in Virginia was formed in Prince George county, in 1714, by Robert Norden, who then came from England, and was their pastor till he died, in 1725. In 1727, Mr. Richard Jones was ordained their pastor; and in 1742 they had about forty members, as one of them then wrote to Newport, which letter I have. About the same time, a man went from thence and formed a church on the sea-coasts of North Carolina. But these all held to general redemption, and their churches are since dissolved.

In the mean time, religion was revived in Virginia by other means; for Samuel Morris, of Hanover county, was converted in 1740, by reading some old books; and upon his reading them to his neighbours, they set up a meeting at his house, instead of going to church. And in 1743, he obtained a book of sermons, taken down in short hand, as Mr. Whitefield delivered them in Glasgow, and printed there. The reading of these had such an effect upon the people, that more came to hear them than his house could hold, and they built a meeting-house for the purpose. He was also called to read them in several other places, and many were affected thereby. But they were called to account for not going to church, and they pleaded the act of toleration for dissenters, though they knew not what to call themselves. At length they called themselves Lutherans, because they had received much benefit from the writings of that reformer. And hearing

* Calamy's Account, vol. ii. p. 607.
† Historical Society, vol. i. p. 228.

of a wonderful preacher, near an hundred miles off, they sent for him, in July, 1743, and he preached to them four days, with exceeding great effect; and he advised them to pray and sing in their meetings, which they had not done before; so great is the influence of tradition. Mr. William Robinson was the man whose labours had then been so much blessed among them; and when he was going away, they asked him what he called himself; he said, "A Presbyterian." "Then we are Presbyterians too," said they, for your religion is just like ours."

They then sent for other ministers of that denomination, from Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and obtained help from them, from time to time, until Mr. Samuel Davies settled there in 1748. And in 1751, he published an account of this work, and of other Presbyterians in those parts. Mr. Davies became the president of New Jersey college afterwards, and died there; and his sermons are now much esteemed in Europe, as well as America. Those ministers met at Philadelphia in 1789, and formed a society which they called "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America." In 1793, it was said that they had about two hundred churches in all the states south of New England.* But they have very few of them in the old part of Virginia, where the Baptists have increased greatly.

Mr. Samuel Harris was born in Hanover county, January 12, 1724, and he was so much esteemed, that he became a colonel of their militia, a member of their legislature, and a judge of their courts, before he was converted in 1758; when he not only became a Baptist preacher, but also much of a father among their churches for above thirty years. And some ministers from Pennsylvania went and formed some Baptist churches in the north part of Virginia, about 1760, who were not fully agreed with those southern Baptists, for the following reasons: The Philadelphia association had adopted the confession of faith which was composed by the Baptists in London in 1689, with the addition of an article which

* Rippon's Register, vol. ii. p. 131.

required the laying on of hands upon every member of the church, which the others did not hold. Some eminent ministers in England had also carried the doctrine of particular election so far, as to deny that any minister had a right to address the calls of the gospel to all sinners without distinction, and the Philadelphians had adopted this opinion; and they called themselves Regular Baptists, while those who went from Connecticut were called Separates. And there were many unhappy contentions between them for many years; for the New England Baptists in general do not hold to the laying on of hands upon every member, nor to the above restriction of the calls of the gospel.

We generally believe the doctrine of particular election, and the final perseverance of every true believer, while we proclaim a free salvation to all the children of men, and even to the chief of sinners; and we hold that God has appointed the means as well as the end, and the means in order to the end of every event. When the Jews were obstinate against receiving Jesus as the true Messiah, he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. xi. 25—30. The only reason why any one is chosen, called, and saved, rather than another, is because so it seemed good in the sight of God. But many men imagine that the choice and doings of men are the cause of it, and so would take the glory of it to themselves, instead of giving it to God alone. God never fails of doing justice to all, while he says, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on

whom I will show mercy." And his glory essentially requires this. Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19. Therefore he says, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" Matt. xx. 15. The meanest person upon earth has a right to give his own property to whom he will; and how mad are those who deny this right to the eternal God! Many ruin their souls by fighting against God, but it is impossible for him to be deceived or disappointed in any of his designs of mercy, as well as of justice. And free salvation by the Son of God is held forth to all men in the gospel, as openly as the brazen serpent was to the camp of Israel; and the condemnation of all who do not receive him, is because they *hate the light*. John iii. 14—20. Therefore the most moving methods ought to be taken with sinners in general, to enlighten and turn them from sin to God. Light concerning these things gained gradually among the Baptists in Virginia, so as to unite them as one people in 1787, and they have increased much since.

Mr. John Leland, from whom I had many of these things, was born at Grafton in Massachusetts, May 14, 1754; and after he was baptized and called to preach, he set off with his young wife, in the fall of 1776, and went into Virginia, and settled in the county of Orange. He travelled and laboured much in those parts, and had a considerable hand in procuring the law for equal liberty, before inserted. Though the behaviour of Episcopal ministers themselves did more towards it; for many of them would play cards, swear profanely, and get drunk, while they imprisoned about thirty Baptist ministers for preaching the gospel to precious souls, without license from them. This moved their rulers to abolish such tyranny. Mr. Leland baptized about a hundred persons in and near Yorktown, the year before the British army was captivated there; and in the whole he baptized above six hundred in those parts. He published a Virginia Chronicle, before referred to, and some other things; and in 1791, he returned to New England, and settled in Cheshire in Massachusetts.

But Mr. Stearns spent his life in those parts, and died

in peace, November 20, 1771. And the Baptists have been increasing in North Carolina ever since, and have been so highly esteemed by their fellow-citizens, that many members of their churches have been representatives and senators in their legislature, judges in their courts, and in other offices of their government.

Mr. Daniel Marshall, after much service there, went on to Georgia, where he formed a church in 1772, and was the pastor of it until he died, it being the first Baptist church in that state; and his son Abraham Marshall has been pastor of it ever since. The Baptists have been the most numerous of any religious denomination in Georgia, for many years past. They have lately increased much in Savannah, their capital. The late Honourable Joseph Clay, who had been one of the federal judges of the district court, was ordained a Baptist minister there, in January, 1804. There are many associations in those parts, in one of which were fifty-six churches, and three thousand seven hundred and ninety-six members, in 1792; and they have greatly increased since. One minister baptized about an hundred persons there, in the year 1803; and when the first association of South Carolina met that fall, they received the report of Mr. John Rooker, one of their ministers, who had been sent to preach among the Catawba Indians, that his preaching among them was received with much attention, and they were very thankful for his being sent among them; and they not only desired him to come again, but also that a schoolmaster might be sent to teach the Indian youth in human learning, and also in Christian principles. The association agreed to send him among them again, and also a schoolmaster, according to their request, and to bear their expenses. Some of the English near them appeared to have a gracious work begun among them, and it was hoped that the Indians would share in the same blessing.

A great many negroes in those parts have been converted and baptized, and some of them have been called to preach the gospel. George Liele was so a little before our American war; and in the time of it he fell into British

hands, and went down and baptized a number in Savannah, and then was carried to Jamaica, where he began to preach to the blacks in 1784; and he behaved so well as to be favoured by the government there, and his success was so great that he had three hundred and fifty members in his church in 1791.* And we have heard of much increase among them since. There is one such minister and church in Virginia, besides a great number of blacks who have joined to the English churches there. And Andrew Bryan has a large negro church in Savannah in Georgia; and Mr. Abraham Marshall assisted in his ordination. The Charleston Association, in 1803, received an account from the Bethel Association, that more than fourteen hundred persons had joined to all their churches in a year. Such has been the work in those parts.

The first Baptist church in the State of New York was formed at Oyster Bay on Long Island. Elder Robert Feke wrote from thence to Newport, November 29, 1741, and said, "God has begun a glorious work among us, and I hope he will carry it on to his own glory, and the salvation of many souls. There have been seventeen added to our little band in about three months." I suppose their church had not been formed long.

The first Baptist church in the city of New York was formed in 1762, under the ministry of Mr. John Gano, who is since in Kentucky. There were a few Baptist churches before, northward of the city, near Connecticut line. And soon after the British army was captivated at Saratoga, in 1777, many such churches were formed in those parts, and they have been increasing ever since. And a large number of people have removed from New England, and planted the lands near the heads of the Mohawk, Susquehanna, and Genesee rivers; and a Baptist church was formed in 1789 near the Otsego lake, which is the first church in the Otsego Association, which was formed in 1795, and it increased in three years to twenty-eight churches, and one thousand two hundred and ninety-two members. They have been increasing to this

* Rippon's Register, vol. i. p. 334.

day, and have formed another association further westward. These associations have sent ministers to preach to the Six Nations of Indians, and also among the English in Upper Canada, where they have been well received, and an association is formed there. Several Baptists ministers in those parts were preachers before in Congregational churches. If we look again to the southward, we may still see greater wonders of grace, as well as of Divine Providence.

The lands upon the river Ohio were so much esteemed, both by the French and English nations, that they commenced a war about them in 1755, which ended in yielding those lands, as well as all Canada, to Great Britain. Our people began to plant Kentucky about 1777, and inhabitants have increased so much in that State, as now to have six representatives in Congress, which is one more than New Hampshire has. Many of the inhabitants went from Virginia, and the Baptists have increased to six associations, and to fourteen thousand and seventy-six communicants in their churches, as we had a printed account in 1802. And there are a large number of such churches on both sides of the Ohio, besides those in Kentucky; and they are scattered into each of these United States.

As associations have been often mentioned, I will now describe the nature of them. Associations had been very cruel and oppressive in Connecticut, as they were there established by law; and many Baptists could not believe, for a long time, that they could be so conducted as to be serviceable any way; and it has ever been difficult to keep a clear distinction in our minds, between the real nature of things, and the abuse of them which is very common. When difficulties arise in churches, few have the patience and wisdom which is necessary for the carrying the laws of Christ into effect against offenders, without looking to any earthly power for help in such cases.

The Warren Association was formed, September 8, 1767, upon the following principles. They refuse to hear and judge of any personal controversy in any of their churches, or to intermeddle with the affairs of any

church which hath not freely joined with them. When any church desires to join with them, they send messengers and a letter to the association, showing when their church was formed, the faith and order of it, and their number of members. If satisfaction is gained, they are received by a vote of the association, and the moderator gives the messengers the right hand of fellowship. Each church is to send messengers and a letter, or a letter at least to the annual meeting of the association, to give an account of the state of their church, and how many have been added, dismissed, excluded, or that have died in the year. If this is neglected for a number of years, or if the church departs from her former faith and order, she is left out of the association. In 1771, they began to print the minutes of their annual proceedings, which any may have if they will. By these means, mutual acquaintance and communion hath been begotten and promoted; errors in doctrine or conduct have been exposed and guarded against; false teachers have been detected, and warnings published against them; destitute flocks have been occasionally supplied; the weak and oppressed have been relieved, and many have been animated and encouraged in preaching the gospel through the land, and in new plantations in the wilderness.

A collection is made at our annual meetings for the widows and children of poor ministers. A society has also been incorporated, to collect money to assist pious youths in obtaining learning, with a view to the ministry. And a Missionary Society is formed to collect money for the support of travelling ministers, and to instruct and direct them therein, according to their best discretion. And several of them have visited many destitute flocks, and some have gone into Upper Canada, with great acceptance.

The Warren Association has extended over all the old colony of Plymouth, and over Massachusetts as high as Connecticut river, and into the borders of three other States; and its benefits soon became visible to others. The Stonington Association began in 1772, and it extends over the east part of Connecticut, and the west of Rhode

Island state. The New Hampshire Association began in 1776, and it extends over the east part of that state, and over the county of York in the District of Maine. The Shaftsbury Association began in 1781, and it is in the south-west part of Vermont, the west of Massachusetts, and east of New York state. The Woodstock Association began in 1783, and is in the easterly part of Vermont, and westerly of New Hampshire. The Groton Conference began in 1785, and it extends from Connecticut river near the sea, across the state of Rhode Island, into the county of Bristol in Massachusetts. The Bowdoinham Association began in 1787, and it extends over three counties in the District of Maine. The Vermont Association began the same year, and it is in the north-west part of that state. The Meredith Association began in 1789, and is in the northerly part of New Hampshire, and the adjoining part of Vermont. The Danbury Association began in 1790, and it extends from the south borders of Massachusetts, across Connecticut to the sea, west of their great river. The Leyden Association began in 1793, on the north borders of Massachusetts, and it extends into the corners of New Hampshire and Vermont, on both sides of Connecticut river. The Richmond Conference began in 1795, and is in the north-east part of Vermont. The Sturbridge Association began in 1801, and it is in the southerly part of the middle of Massachusetts, and northerly of Connecticut.

Thus we have thirteen associations in New England, in which are three hundred and twelve churches, and twenty-three thousand six hundred and thirty-eight members, where there were but nine Baptist churches in 1700, and but five more in all America. We have also many other churches in New England besides what are in these associations; and I conclude that in the whole of these United States, there are now about twelve hundred Baptist churches, and an hundred thousand members. And the main of them have been formed within forty years past. The work of God in late years has given much light to our old Baptist churches. The darkness that was in the first Baptist church in Boston, caused the forming

of the second in 1742; but light gradually gained among them, until they settled a pastor there in 1765, who was clear in gospel doctrines; and religion was soon after revived there, and the two churches were united, and they have been increasing to this day. They have gained such credit in our government, that Dr. Stillman, pastor of their first church, was called to preach the election sermon at Boston in 1779, and Dr. Baldwin, pastor of the second, in 1802. In the spring of 1803, religion was again revived in Boston, which still continues, and their two churches have increased to six hundred and forty members. This work is now powerful in Charlestown, Malden, Woburn, Reading, Danvers, Salem, and Beverly; the first of which churches was formed in 1793, and the rest since, all within about twenty miles of Boston. Our churches in general hold to the doctrines of grace, Christian experience, and the importance of a holy life, much as the chief fathers of New England did. They differ very little from the fathers of Plymouth colony, only about infant baptism. And though the fathers of Massachusetts made laws to establish the government of the church over the world, yet when that power was lost, Boston renounced the government of the world over the church, as we have proved. And this practice cannot now be vindicated by Scripture, reason, nor by the example of any of the fathers of New England, for seventy years after it was planted. And it is also contrary to the general government of these United States.

Infant baptism was not named in the Holy Scriptures, nor in any history, for two hundred years after the birth of Christ. And when it was first named, ministers called it *regeneration*. Because Christ says, "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," they held that baptism washed away original sin, and that infants could not be saved if they were not baptized. And because Christ says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," they held that no person could be saved without eating the Lord's supper; and they brought infants to it, as well as to baptism. For

the truth of these facts, we appeal to the most noted writings of the third and fourth centuries. A noted minister of the third century said, "It is for that reason, because by the sacrament of baptism the pollutions of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized."*

This, and more of like nature, was quoted by an eminent advocate for infant baptism in our day, to defend the practice, though not the opinion of its being regeneration. But the church of Rome, and the church of England, have long held that ministers could regenerate persons by baptizing them. And they who renounced that practice have been called Anabaptists to this day. Natural affection for children, and for the sick and dying, has caused an amazing attachment to ministers who they thought could save persons from hell by baptizing them; and from thence came the notion of the necessity of an external succession of ministerial ordinations, even through the corruptions of antichrist.

But as fire and wind, as well as water, are of a cleansing influence, they are all made use of to explain the nature of regeneration, which is effected only by the power of the Holy Ghost. Matt. iii. 11. John iii. 5. 8. The work of sanctification in believers is carried on by the ordinances of baptism and the holy supper, but they are not spoken of in Scripture as the means of begetting faith in any person; for faith cometh by hearing the word of God. Rom. x. 17. But in all nations where ministers have been supported by force, only one party of teachers and rulers have shared in the gains of it, to the constant injury of all the rest of the community. And this way has been upheld by perverse disputers, who have supposed that gain was godliness. 1 Tim. vi. 5. But if the vengeance of God came upon men who were *partial* in his law, what will he do to those who make *partial* laws of their own? Mal. ii. 9.

And since a door is now opened in our land for a clear deliverance from these evils, can any man be free of guilt if he tries to shut it? This consideration is enforced by

* Clark's Defence of Infant Baptism, 1752, p. 111.

late experience; for the man, who was the chief magistrate of these United States for four years, was very fond of such *partiality*. But a man was elected into that office in 1801, who is for equal liberty to all the nation. And if the Holy Scriptures are well regarded, we shall be the happiest people upon earth; for they show that every man, who is fit for a ruler, is like good trees and vines, which yield sweet fruits to all around them, without injuring any one; and that tyrants are like the bramble, which would set the whole community on *fire*, and burn up the best characters in it, if they stood in the way of their gratifying their own lusts of pride and covetousness. Judg. ix. 7—15. Therefore our Lord says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Matt. vii. 20. And this should ever guide all electors of officers, as well as all men in office.

A review of the dealings of God with his ancient people may afford much help to us all. For the highest rulers in Israel had no right to make any laws at all, but were to govern the people by the laws of God, which he had given them by Moses and the prophets. The tribe of Levi, in which was the family of Aaron, were to have the whole government of their worship, and to offer sacrifices upon the altar of God. Those offerings, with the tenth part of the produce of the good land which he had given them, were freely to be brought in annually to the place which God chose, and the Priests and Levites were to have their living in that way, and they were to have the care of the poor. Each man in Israel was to bring in those tithes and offerings to the place which God chose, in such a manner as to be able to say before him, "I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless and the widow according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them. I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken aught thereof, for any unclean use, nor given aught thereof for the dead; but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and nave

done all that thou hast commanded me. Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey. This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments; thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken to his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments; and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour, and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken." Deut. xxvi. 13—19.

Thus we may see that the support of religious ministers in Israel, as well as the poor, was to be done voluntarily, as each man would desire the blessing of God upon his labours, as well as the salvation of his soul; and also that they could not be a holy people in any other way, but by obeying the voice of God with all their hearts, and with all their souls. And for any community to call themselves a holy people, only because they have an established worship by the laws of men, enforced by the sword, is directly contrary to the national worship of Israel which was owned of God. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, and the devil tempted him to presume upon being supported by the promise of God, without going in the ways of his precepts. Matt. iv. 6, 7. Psalm xci. 11, 12. And how full is the world of this iniquity!

The nation of Israel was advanced above all other nations, when they obeyed the revealed will of God, in the days of David and Solomon, according to this promise. But in after generations they declined from that way, until God said, "As troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent." Hosea vi. 9. "The heads thereof judge for reward, the

priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." Micah iii. 11, 12. This prophecy was partly accomplished by the Babylonians, and fully by the Romans. And the Jews are now monuments of warning to all nations. Isa. xxx. 17. Thus present events prove the truth of revelation.

Before the destruction of the second temple, God gave the Jews a new warning, and said, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me; but ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. iii. 8—10.

Here we may see that a voluntary obedience to God about his worship and ministers, or the contrary, brought his blessings or curses upon his people; and he now says to people under the gospel, "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. But as some ministers of the devil had prejudiced many in the church of Corinth against this apostle, he refused to take any support of them, though he said "Forgive me this wrong." 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. xii. 13. Thus it appears, that there is a stronger guard set against deceitful teachers, by the laws of Christ, than there was by the law of Moses. Yet such is the depravity of human nature, that the supporting of ministers of the devil by force hath filled the world with war and blood, under the name of Christianity, much more than the na-

tion of Israel ever did. And this is now the greatest handle that infidels have to use against revealed religion The command is, "Let God be true and every man a liar;" while many bring the lies of men against the truth of God, and so discover that he hath said the truth concerning them.

Upon the case before us, he says, "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 6—8. So that everlasting life, or endless misery, are connected with faithfulness or unfaithfulness in this affair. Yea, and these things are personal between God and individuals, as much as faith and unbelief are; and therefore they are entirely out of the jurisdiction of the magistrate. And we have a glorious promise of God, which says, "In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the habitation of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God, forever and ever." Micah iv. 1—5.

Now it is most certain that this prophecy hath never yet been fulfilled; but it will as surely come to pass here-

after, as ever the promise did of Christ's being born of a virgin. The mountains and hills here mean the kingdoms and states of this world, and the mountain of the house of the Lord, is the kingdom of Christ, who will subdue all other kingdoms, and reign forever. And he says, "The kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Daniel ii. 35. 44; vii. 27. People shall go up to the house of God, and personally obey his revealed will, as freely as the water *flows* in its channels. And what can be freer than water? Every idea of force is excluded from the support of his worship; and all the force for the support of religious teachers, that ever was used under the name of Christianity, was done by adding to his word. And Christ says, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

O how solemn are these things! Mystery Babylon was built by adding to the word of God, and by taking away what is plainly written in it; and all religious establishments by the laws of men, that ever were made in our world, were made in that way, and so are parts of that great city. She is the mother of harlots, and she hath many daughters. And as Christ is the only head of his church, every community that supports her ministers in the name of any earthly head, is a harlot. And in Babylon was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. Rev. xviii. 24. The blood of Abel was shed by Cain, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 1 John iii. 12. And the guilt of blood will come upon all men who imitate old persecutors. Matt. xxiii. 35, 36. And God says, "In the last days perilous times shall come; for

men shall be lovers of their ownselves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. iii. 1—5.

Language cannot describe our times more exactly, than it was thus done by God, near eighteen hundred years ago. And how blind must men be, if they imagine that godliness can be supported by such characters! and yet such have equal votes in government with the best men in it. The best churches that ever supported their ministers by force, had no more than *a form* of godliness; and all men have denied the *power* of it, who have denied that the laws and Spirit of Christ were entirely sufficient to support his ministers, without any arm of flesh in the case. And God says, "Hold fast *the form* of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." And *the form* says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. i. 13; iii. 16, 17.

The men of the world are allowed to make laws, and to enforce them with the sword, to punish immoralities, and to keep the civil peace; and real Christians are the best subjects of civil government in the world, while they obey God rather than man in *the form of godliness*. And though the worst of wars have lately been carried on by sea, yet it will hereafter be said, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. For the Lord is

our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast; they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey." Isaiah xxxiii. 20—23. And though the merchants of Babylon, and her mariners, will make great lamentations for the loss of their *bloody* gains, yet the Holy Spirit says, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." Rev. xviii. 20. The apostles explained the prophets, and finished writing the book of God; and heaven and earth will rejoice to see his truth and justice glorified.

THE END.

A

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